was Attila's slave, bound to the payment of tribute. Therefore, in whom fortune had made was are was Attila's slave, bound to the paymont of thouse. Therefore in attacking him covertly like a worthless slave, he was acting towards his better, whom fortune had made his master. attacking him covertiy made his better, whom fortune had made his masser, here was at here

What a moment it must have been. Here was the full imperial countries of the divine favore order of What a moment it must nave defined imperial of the living representation of the divine favour that made the two has that made the two has the made drawn up in their gorgeous rock drawn up in the gorgeous rock drawn cedence, the living representation in strode the two barbarian amble out their pantomime. Priscus' description of the n Roman Empire supreme, which are the confidence of the Roman and the dors to act out their pantomime. Priscus' description of the Roman and the confidence of the c dors to act out their pantonians dors to act out their pantonians doesn't survive, but nothing better illustrates the Ronto reaction doesn't survive, but nothing better illustrates the confidence of the globe those doesn't survive. reaction doesn't survive, but reaction doesn't survive, but with which Attila trod his particular corner of the globe than the burniliation of the ruler of the eastern Roman Empire. with which Atma troe are globe than ceremonial humiliation of the ruler of the eastern Roman Empire.

An Empire of Many Colours

THERE WAS MUCH more to Attila's European reign of terror, however, than this personal charisma and his finely honed demonstrations of dominance. Such tours de force were as much effect as cause of the two transformations which, in just one generation, had turned the Huns from useful allies of Constantius and Aetius into world conquer ors. Priscus' narrative, implicitly points us towards the causes of these changes, without which Attila's career of conquest could not have happened.

As we've seen, Priscus was not the first east Roman historian-cumdiplomat to visit the Huns. In 411/12, Olympiodorus had taken to sea with his parrot, braving fierce storms off Constantinople, then skirting Athens and up the Adriatic to Aquileia on its northern shore. Unform nately, only a brief summary of this embassy survives, but it does contain one piece of crucial information:

Olympiodorus discusses Donatus and the Huns and the natural talent of their kings for archery. The historian describes the embassy on which he went to them and to Donatus and ... tells how Donatus was deceived by an oath and wickedly killed, how Charaton, the first of the kings, flared up with rage at the murder and how have and how he was calmed down and pacified with regal gifts."

The extract is not without mystery; not least concerning the identity of Donatus - opinion and of Donatus – opinions differ as to whether he was a Hun or not - and

have supposed that the arrival of Olympiodorus' some have supposed that the arrival of Olympiodorus' merely coincide with Donatus' death, but was a successful enactment of the kind. of his sure of the kind of plot that Priscus and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus in the successful enactment of the successful Thossy and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus and more successful enactment of the kind of plot that Priscus the key point is that in 411/12 the subject and himself embroiled in. 33 But the key point is that in 411/12 the subject which himself embroiled by a series of kings (how many is not specified). which suppose the series of kings (how many is not specified), and were ruled by a series of kings (how many is not specified), and were kings operated according to a ranking system which all these kings operated as senior. It sounds have these kings operated as senior. full were ruled by a series of another and these out Charaton as senior. It sounds highly reminiscent in the second of another and the second out the second hull we kings operated according to a ranking system which clearly the these kings operated as senior. It sounds highly reminiscent, in fact, the these charaton as senior. It sounds highly reminiscent, in fact, and the control of t the hierarchical system of another nomadic group, the Akatziri, of the fate came to Priscus' attention during his own embassing fate came to Priscus attention during his own embassing fate came to Priscus attention during his own embassing fate came to Priscus attention during h of the hierarchical system attention during his own embassy. When short fate came to Priscus' attention during his own embassy. When the fate came at the Huns' camp, Onegesius was arrived at the Huns' of the came to Final at the Huns' camp, Onegesius was away with Romans arrived at the this group. The opportunity to do with the Romans son subduing this group. the Romans arrived at the first group. The opportunity to do so had be Romans subduing this group. The opportunity to do so had held shout in an interesting fashion, as Priscus describes. Atila's eldest som interesting fashion, as Priscus describes:

The [Akatziri] had many rulers according to their tribes and clans, The [Akatzhij han Theodosius sent gifts to them to the end that the Emperor Theodosius renounce their alliance. and the Emperor the end that the might unanimously renounce their alliance with Attila and they might the Romans. The environment of the Romans and the environment of the environment o they might with the Romans. The envoy who conveyed the gifts get peace with the Romans to each of the kings have seek peace with the each of the kings by rank, with the result did not deliver the senior in office, received his gifts second that Kouridachus, the senior in office, received his gifts second that Nouriem thus overlooked and deprived of his due honours, and, being thus overlooked called in Attila against his fellow kings.

Apart from allowing one the pleasure of imagining the report of the Roman ambassador who had managed to make such a mess of his mission,44 the passage gives us some idea of the kind of political system operating among the Huns in the early 410s.35

The contrast with Attila's time, a generation or so later, could not be more marked. Priscus spent a great deal of time at the Hunnic ourt, and devoted many words to its structure and modes of operation. As we have seen, there was then an inner core of leading men -Onegesius first, then others such as Edeco, Scottas and Berichus whom Attila treated with great respect; but none of them enjoyed any tind of royal dignity. In all of this information, there is not the slightest indication that the Huns had more than one ruler: Attila himself. The multiplicity of power-sharing kings of 411 had given way to a monarch the literal sense of the word. Of the process that ended up with spreme power in one man's hands, no account survives. As you would expect, all the indications suggest, however, that it was not a Reachill evolution. The final act in the drama was Attila's murder of brother Bleda. By that stage, power had anyway narrowed to just

two members of the same family – which suggests that Rua (or number of Hunnic royal lines. two members of the same family - which suggests that Rua (or Rua) in reducing the number of Hunnic royal lines.

There of Bleda's murder is probably a fair highly a fair reducing the same family a fair reducing the number of Hunnic royal lines.

uncle whom
in reducing the number of Flumble Toyal Miles.

The naked violence of Bleda's murder is probably a fair indicated and Attila and Bleda had been flust bleday. The naked violence of Bleda's Indiana Probably a fair indicator between Constantinople and Attila and Bleda, before the of how the other surplus kings and Attila and Bleda, first help that Viminacium in 441, resulted in the return, as we have the tiations between Constantinopic attacked Viminacium in 441, resulted in the return, as we have the fleeing Hunnic royals, Mama and Atakam, who were promise of Attila and his proposition. attacked Viminacium in 441, resultant and Atakam, who we have the standard of two fleeing Hunnic royals, Mama and Atakam, who were promptly might equally have a Bleda, for b. of two fleeing Hunnic royals, ividing of Attila and Bleda, for Run Brown Research two brothers, but might equally have been described by the state of two brothers. impaled. They could have been the might equally have been descended had at least two brothers, but might equally have been descended the suppressed earlier by Rua. The whole fugitive incompanies the suppressed to the suppressed had at least two brotners, but from royal lines suppressed which so bedevilled Hunno-Roman diplomacy in the 440s, was cleanly which so bedevilled Hunnic royals and ex-royals of one kind or another than the state of the which so bedevilled runnic royals and ex-royals of one kind or another of another to the names of one kind or another or Maximinus and Priscus had to listen to the names of seventeen number, so we are all number, so we are all number. Maximinus and Fiscus fugitives being read out – a very small number, so we are cleanly individuals who posed some kind of threat dealing here with individuals who posed some kind of threat at the highest level. It is also possible that some of the lesser kings had accepted demotion rather than face extinction. (When something similar was happening among Goths in the decade after Attila's death though most of the minor royals died fighting or fled from the scene, at least one was willing to be demoted to leading-noble status.49

Set against what we know about nomad anthropology, political centralization - the first of the two transformations that concern us here - must also have been associated with a broader transformation among the Huns. Devolved power structures occur very naturally among nomadic groups, because their herds cannot be concentrated in large groupings, for fear of overgrazing. In the nomad world, the main purpose of any larger political structure is simply to provide a temporary forum where grazing rights can be negotiated, and a force put together, if necessary, to protect those rights against outsiders. This being the case, the permanent centralization of political power among the Huns strongly implies that they were no longer so economically dependent upon the produce of their flocks. Priscus provides a number of clues to the nature of these economic adjustments. As we saw in Chapter 4 Chapter 4, nomads always need to form economic relationships with settled agricultural producers. This was clearly the case with the Hunds and commercial and commercial exchanges were still taking place in the 440s. But by the time of April at the time of Attila, the main form of exchange between Hunnic normal and Roman acriculture. and Roman agriculturalist was not grain in return for animal products.

aid of one kind or another. This form previous generations, when Hune 1 with the form the for the Roman service for the Roman servic or one kind or another. This form previous generations, when Huns had the had its origins in previous generations, when Huns had the had its origins for the Roman state. Uldin and the first we know of to have followed the first we know of to have followed the first we know of the had the generations, when Huns had its original for the Roman state. Uldin and his service formed mercenary we know of to have fulfilled this role formed were the first Hunnic forces may be serviced. her change mercenary service are roman state. Uldin and his of comments were the first we know of to have fulfilled this role, in the property were the first we know of to have fulfilled this role, in the property and larger Hunnic forces may have aided Constanting and larger supported Aeting in the property and larger supported Aeting in the property of the prope profiles were the first we know of the nave fulfilled this role, in the hollowers were the first Hunnic forces may have aided Constantius in the 420s and 430s and 400s, and certainly supported Aetius in the 420s and 430s. and larger representation in the 420s and 430s.

If we will also make a sided Constant and the 420s and 430s.

If we will also make a sided Constant and the 420s and 430s.

If we will also make a sided Constant and the 420s and 430s. and dertainly super service for pay evolved into demands for shortly after, military servicely when the line was crossed: be shortly after, minutes, precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly menaces. Precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly menaces, precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly after, minutes, precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly after, minutes, precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly after, minutes, precisely when the line was crossed is impossshortly after, but Attila's uncle Rua certainly launched one main with menaces. Floring with menaces uncle Rua certainly launched one major assault with 10 say, but Attila's uncle with cash in mind, even if he classically launched one major assault with cash in mind, even if he classically launched one major assault with cash in mind, even if he classically launched one major assault with cash in mind, even if he classically launched one major assault with the launched one major assault but Attila s with cash in mind, even if he also prothe east Roman Empire with cash in mind, even if he also prothe east service for the west. By the reign of Amilthe east Roman service for the west. By the reign of Attila, targeted midd mercenary service for the west and it clearly emerges from aid had become tribute, and it clearly emerges from foreign aid had become diplomacy that the main thing the Huns form these exchanges, and from their periodic and the second from these exchanges, and from their periodic and the second from these exchanges, and from the second from the sec from these exchanges, and from their periodic assaults across was cash and yet more cash. As we saw and saw was cash and yet more cash. frontier, was cash and yet more cash. As we saw earlier, the first frontier, was and Bleda and the east Romans fixed the size may between Attila at seven hundred pounds of may between the size of gold - and from dissipation annual tribute at seven hundred pounds of gold - and from of this annual transfer and there the demands could only escalate. Hunnic warfare against the brought other one-sided economic exchanges in its Romans and ransoms such as the one Priscus and Maximike: booty, slaves and ransoms such as the one Priscus and Maximike: minus negotiated.38

By the 440s, then, military predation upon the Roman Empire had become the source of an ever-expanding flow of funds into the Hunnic world. To overthrow a system of ranked but more or less equal kings, the king-who-would-be-preeminent needed to convince the followers of the other kings that they should transfer their loyalties to him. Comering the market in the flow of funds from the Empire was the ideal means of putting sufficient powers of patronage into the hands of just one man, and rendering the old political structures redundant. Only by controlling the flow of new funds could one king outbid the others in the struggle for support. Already in the mid- to late-fourth contury, Huns had presumably been raiding and intimidating both other nomads and Germanic agriculturalists north of the Black Sea, but real centralization only became possible once the main body of the Huns was operating close to the Roman world. Raid and intimidate the Goths and you might get some slaves, a bit of silver and some spicultural produce, but that was about it – not enough to fund fullkale political revolution. But do the same vis-d-vis the Roman Empire, the gold would begin to roll in, first in hundreds of pounds

annually, then thousands – enough to transform both economic we call systems.

itical systems.

While the argument is not susceptible to proof, we could with the past. As mension not not susceptible to proof, we could with the past. As mension not not susceptible to proof, we could with the past. While the argument is not privor, we could stand these transformations as an adaptation away from nonado rear a range of animal nonado easily stand these transformations as rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar rather than a complete break with the past. As mentioned nomadar normal circumstances nomans and arriver to make full to the varying qualities of available grazing. The horse figures primarily animal, used for raiding, war, transition of the varying qualities of available grazing. of the varying qualities of available of the varying qualities of the varying qualit as an expensive, almost runny as an expensive, almost runny as an expensive, almost runny and milk provide only a very inefficient return to and return to the quality and quant and trade; its meat and many part and trade; its meat and trade; i terms of usable protein comparing terms of usable protein comparing required. As a result, nomads generally keep relatively of bowever, warfare becomes a financially attractive few grazing required. As a result, horses. If, however, warfare becomes a financially attractive for horses. If, however, warfare becomes a financially attractive for horses. If, however, warfare becomes a financially attractive for horses. horses. If, however, was horses. If, however, was horses at did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition, as it did when the Huns came within range of the Roman osition osition. osition, as it did when the start to breed increasing number than nomads might well start to breed increasing number to breed increasing number to be process, into a particular to breed increasing number to be process. Empire, then nothing mumber of horses for war – evolving, in the process, into a particular type of horses for war – evolving. This could never have — type of of horses for war militarily predatory normadic group. This could never have worked at the notanged on the steppe, where the notanged at a subsistence strategy out on the steppe, where the potential proceeds from warfare were so much less.

It is impossible to prove that this is what happened, but one relevant factor is the size of the fifth-century Hunnic homeland, the Hungarian Plain: while providing good-quality grazing, it was much smaller than the plains of the Great Eurasian Steppe the Huns had left behind. Its 42,400 square kilometres amount to less than 4 per cent of the grazing available, for instance, in the republic of Mongolia alone. And because the grazing was now so limited, some historians have wondered whether the Huns were evolving towards a fully sedentary existence in the fifth century. This is a possible argument, but not a necessary one. The Hungarian Plain notionally provides grazing for 320,000 horses, but this figure must be reduced so as to accommodate other animals, forest and so on; so it would be reasonable to suppose that it could support, maybe, 150,000. Given that each nomad warning requires a string of ten horses to be able to rotate and not overite them, the Hungarian Plain would thus provide sufficient space w support horses for up to 15,000 warriors. I would doubt that there were ever more Huns than this in total, so that, as late as the reign of Attila, there is the state of relative to the state of the sta part of their nomad character. 39 Whatever the case, the real point that, once they found that, once they found themselves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within hailing distance of the Roman Empire, the Hung and the selves within the selves Empire, the Huns perceived a new and better way to make a lively

military predation upon the relatively rich economy of the world.

med on military predation upon the relatively rich economy of the world.

military predation upon the relatively rich economy of the military predation upon the relatively rich economy of the military predation upon the relatively rich economy of the of the world. Implicitly documents the other fundamental priscus, evidence also implicitly priscus, made Attila's Empire possible. At his court, Maximin priscus, made Attila's primarily with were interacting primarily with an inner core of second priscus were interacting himself. Identically with a second priscus when with Attila himself. Identically with a second priscus when with Attila himself. Identically with a second priscus when with Attila himself. priscus made Artila s primarily with an inner core of secondmade interacting primarily with an inner core of secondmade priscus were interacting primarily with an inner core of secondmade priscus were with Attila himself. Identifying the language and priscus rather than with Attila himself. Identifying the language and priscus rather manal names belong to be found. dange interacting printarily with an inner core of second-ind priscus were interacting printarily with an inner core of second-and priscus when with Attila himself. Identifying the language group and priscus when with an inner core of second-ing priscus were interacting the language group and priscus and are extremely interacting interacting and are extremely interacting the language group. plant than with a personal names belong to is fraught with danger, but the plant of these men are extremely interesting. There is no doubt pankers, there is no doubt that and these men are extremely interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these Bedeco possessed Germanic or Germanicized manes and Bedeco possessed Germanic or Germanicized. that and these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. There is no doubt that manes of these men are carrently interesting. name or Germanicized names, Oregesius and Scottas probably did. And both Attila ('Little Father') while Berichus are also Germanic. This doesn't mean that these in the probably are also Germanic. ones Berichus and Germanic. This doesn't mean that these individ-and Bleda are also Germanic rather than Hunnic Origin (1) and Bleda are also of Germanic rather than Hunnic origin (though were necessarily of because we know that by the mid Go.) were necessaring, because we know that by the mid-fifth centry may have been), because term for a number of corhic, probably the collective term for a number of they may have been, the collective term for a number of mutually my Gothic probably the collective term for a number of mutually my may have been dialects spoken across central and makensible Germanic dialects. Gothic Programmic dialects spoken across central and eastern on was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the main languages of the Humain Programmic Was one of the Main Programmic Was one of the Was one of th onprehensible oction and eastern languages of the Hunnic Empire, and purple was one of the main languages of the Hunnic Empire, and purple at Attila's court. Hence, in addition puope was one Empire, and Hence, in addition to their original was spoken at Attila's court. Hence, in addition to their original Hunric names (and the argument continues over what type of Hunnic names (as originally spoke), important figures in the Hunnic language the Huns originally spoke) Inguage une roundic seem to have had Germanic or Germanicized names as well.40 Empire seems and the Why had Germanic languages come to play a prominent role in the

Hunnic Empire? The explanation lies in the broader evolution of Attila's Empire. As far back as the 370s when they were attacking Goths beyond the Black Sea, Huns were forcing others they had already subdued to fight alongside them. When they first attacked the Greuthungi, starting the avalanche that ended at the battle of Hadrianople (see p. 167), they were operating in alliance with Iranian-speaking Alan nomads. And whenever we encounter them subsequently, we find that Hunnic forces always fought alongside non-Hunnic allies. Although Uldin, as we saw in Chapter 5, was not a conqueror on the scale of Attila, once the east Romans had dismantled his following, most of the force they were left with to resettle turned out to be Germanic-speaking Sciri.41 likewise, in the early 420s, east Roman forces intervening to curb Hunnic power west of the Carpathian Mountains found themselves hef with a large number of Germanic Goths. 42

the years preceding the rise of Attila, the process of incorporation continued apace. By the 440s, an unprecedented number of Germanic groups found themselves within the orbit defined by the

formidable power of Attila the Hun. For example, his Empire of at least three separate clusters of Goths. One group, donting the come of their rivals, would later become of their rivals. formidable power of Attila use have a separate clusters of Goths. One group, don tained at least three separate clusters of Goths. One group, don to Amal family and their rivals, would later become central to the Ostropole. tained at least three separate classes, would later be group, white the Amal family and their rivals, would later become control to the Ostrogoths of a second Gothic supergroup: the Ostrogoths Ahous by the Amal family and their rivers, the Amal family and their rivers, the Ostrogothe central to the creation of a second Gothic supergroup: the Ostrogothe central to the group was led in the mid-460s by a man called Bigelia, Another control of Attila's some led by the control of A creation of a second Gounc superson the Costrogoths Another Gothic group was led in the mid-460s by a man called Bigells, Another semained under the tight control of Attila's sons until the control of Rupi Gothic group was led in use the tight control of Attila's sons until the later addition, Germanic-speaking Gepids, Rugi, Suevi (left hale third remained under the ugas.

third remained under the ugas.

460s. In addition, Germanic-speaking Gepids, Rugi, Suevi (left below under direct him) third 1990 third 1990 third addition, Germanic open all by this point under direct Hunger of and a looser hegemony may also have been exercised. in 406), Sciri and Herun west also have been direct Humber control, and a looser hegemony may also have been exercised one subgrants. control, and a looser negative.

Lombards and Thuringians, as well as over at least some subgroups of and Franks. 43 We can't put figures on this vast have Lombards and Thurnigians, —
the Alamanni and Franks.⁴³ We can't put figures on this vast body of the Amal-led Goths alone the Alamanni and realism.

Germanic-speaking humanity, but the Amal-led Goths alone to alone the superior of t Germanic-speaking mannand, and hence had maybe a total mousand. And there is no reason to suppose a total maybe a muster ten thousand. And there is no reason to suppose the population of fifty thousand. And there is no reason to suppose the population of they suppose that the other groups were much, if at all, smaller. Many tens of thousands of thousands of thousands of the several hundreds of thousands of the several hundreds of thousands of the several hundreds of the several hund therefore, and probably several hundreds of thousands, of Germanic therefore, and probably up in the Hunnic Empire by the rime of the second that the second the second that t speakers were caught up in the Hunnic Empire by the time of Attla In fact, by the 440s there were probably many more Germanic-speaker than Huns, which explains why 'Gothic' should have become the Empire's lingua franca. Nor do these Germani exhaust the list of Attila's non-Hunnic subjects. Iranian-speaking Alanic and Samatian groups, as we saw earlier, had long been in alliance with the Huns and Attila continued to grasp at opportunities to acquire new allies.

As this catalogue makes clear, the Hunnic Empire was all about incorporating people, not territory: hence Attila's virtual lack of interest in annexing substantial chunks of the Roman Empire. He took two Middle Danubian provinces from the western Empire as the price of his alliance with Aetius, as we saw in Chapter 6, but otherwise showed interest only in establishing a cordon sanitaire between himself and the east. Although there are many brief chronicle references to Attila's military forces as 'Huns' or (if they're archaizing) 'Scythians', from all the show the sources that go into any detail it is clear that his armies, like those of his less powerful predecessors, were always composites, consisting both of Huns and of contingents from the numerous other peoples incorporated into his Empire.44

Archaeological evidence confirms the point (map 12). Since 19451
Ss of material hard mass of material has been unearthed from cemetery excavations of the Great Hungarian the Great Hungarian Plain and its environs, daring to the period thunnic domination.

but no one has ever found any of Attila's camps, since only would remain.) In this material, 'proper' Huns have propered, but no find. In total – and this included would remain.) orarid, but no one mas ever round any of Attila's camps, since only orarid, but no one main.) In this material, 'proper' Huns have proved orarid, would remain.) In total – and this includes the Volga Standard to find. In total – and this includes the Volga Standard to find. Sea as well as the Hungarian Discontinuity and the sea as well as the Hungarian Discontinuity. of the Black sea as well as the Hungarian Plain – archaeological of the Black more than two hundred burial holic hard to nno. In total – and this includes the Volga Steppe as well as the Hungarian Plain – archaeologists and the Black Sea as well as the Hungarian Plain – archaeologists and the Black of the prenell Black Sea as well as the rungarian Plain – archaeologists than two hundred burials as plausibly Hunnic.

Black Sea as well as the rungarian Plain – archaeologists than two hundred burials as plausibly Hunnic.

Black Sea as well as the rungarian Plain – archaeologists than two hundred burials as plausibly Hunnic.

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Black Sea as well as the rungarian Plain – archaeologists

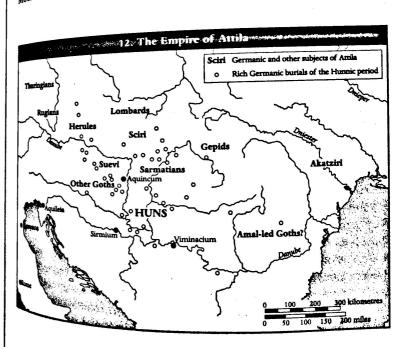
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multified no more distribution of the distribution (some Huns bound the heads of distinguished of (some Huns bound the heads of babies, or cranial deformation (some skull), and the recognition of the distinctive elongated skull), and the recognition of the skull of th the cranial derorman bound the heads of babies, and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull), and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull), and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull), and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull), and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull), and the presence of somest provoked a distinctive elongated skull). which provoked a customer so either the Huns generally disposed of their olled Hunnic cauldrons. So either the Huns generally disposed of their olled Hunnic that did not leave traces, or some other explanation ways that did not leave traces. dled Hunnic caudions. that did not leave traces, or some other explanation is dead in ways that did not Hunnic material. What these fifth ways that and of Hunnic material. What these fifth-century bed in Panubian cemeteries have produced in large quantities. required for the scale of the produced in large quantities, howhiddle Danubian cometeries have produced in large quantities, howhiddle panubian or what look like the remains – of the produced in large quantities, how-Middle Danubian or what look like the remains – of the Huns' erer, are the remains (unfortunately, it isn't possible to rell the subjects (unfortunately) ett, are the remains – of the Huns' centains subjects (unfortunately, it isn't possible to tell the latter apart centains another on the strength of archaeological for Commanic subjects when the strength of archaeological finds alone).47 from one another on the strength of archaeological finds alone).47 for one another close fourth-century antecedents in Gothic- and these remains have close fourth-century antecedents in Gothic- and These remains and north of the Carpathian of the Carpathian of the Carpathian other Germania. Those that interest us here – the fifth-century finds – mark



the emergence of what has been christened the 'Danublan manic burial.48

ervle is characterized by inhumation with manic burial.48

The Danubian style is characterized by inhumation the being deposited burials. (Many other to the being deposited to the burials.) The Danubian style is character of objects being deposited to small number of rich burials. (Many other individuals opposited to small number of rich burials.) cremation, with a large number of rich burials. (Many other individuals in a with few or no grave goods at all.) These characteristic other particularly large. relatively small number of new goods at all.) These characteristic objections with polyhedric new semicine. buried will included items of personal auditions with polyhedric pendants, and brooches, plate buckles, earrings with polyhedric pendants, and been buckles applicated applicates applicated by the pendants applicated appl brooches, plate buckles, carried brooches, carried brooch necklaces. Weapons and manufacture also been been commonly found: saddles with metal appliqués, long straight found: for cavalry use and arrows. The remains also show the cavalry like the cavalry use and arrows. commonly found: saddles with the remains also show up some quite usual, for instance, to bury suitable for cavalry use and account and show up some odd ritual quirks; it became quite usual, for instance, to bury broken with the dead. The kinds of items found in the odd ritual quirks; it became quirks; to bury broken metallic mirrors with the dead. The kinds of items found in the grave which people were buried and, perhaps above all the grave metallic mirrors with the seas.

the ways in which people were buried and, perhaps above all, the ways in which people were their clothes – gathered with a seas. women, in particular, wore their clothes – gathered with a safety the work another closing the outer menty the safety the women, in particular, with another closing the outer garment in definitely por or fibula, on each should, front – all reflect the patterns observable in definitely Germanic These habits and items remains of the fourth century. These habits and items were the pooled and developed further among the massed ranks of Attild's subjects on the Great Hungarian Plain in the fifth.

One possible answer to the question of the lack of Hunnic burnly then, is that, quite simply, they started to dress like their Germanic subject peoples, in just the same way that they learned the Gothe language. If so, it would be impossible to tell Hun from Goth-or anyone else - in the cemetery evidence. But even if our 'real Hum' are lying there in disguise, as it were, this doesn't alter the fact that there were an awful lot of Germani buried in and around the Great Hungarian Plain in the Hunnic period. What we're looking at in the richly furnished Danubian-style burials are the remains of many of Attila's elite Germanic followers. Date and geographical placement make this a dead certainty.50

Every time a new barbarian group was added to Attila's Empire, that group's manpower was mobilized for Hunnic campaigns. Heat the Huns' military machine increased, and increased very quickly, incorporating ever larger numbers of the Germani of central and Romani eastern Europe. In the short term, this benefited the embattled Roman west The west. The reason, as many historians have remarked, that the rush of Germanic immediate many historians have remarked, that the rush of Germanic immediate many historians have remarked. Germanic immigration into the Roman Empire ceased after the of 405-8 (see C) of 405-8 (see Chapter 5) was that those who had not crossed by

tonter by about 410 found themselves incorporated instead into the Huns; and there is an inverse relationship between the Huns; into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the Roman Empire and a supplier of migration into the supplier of the supplier of migration into the supplier of the suppli by about 410 round there is an inverse relationship between the Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Huns; and the rise of Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Huns; a fonder of the Huns; and the Roman Empire and the rise of Hunnic support of migration into the Rower, the received the support term, however, ho

he longer term, however, the respite from assault was only in the longer succession of Hunnic leaders achieved some line and a succession of Hunnic leaders achieved power terrii, in the longer terrii, in the leaders achieved something succession of Hunnic leaders achieved something what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary what the Sasanians historians to what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary to what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary to what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary to what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary to what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near Boundary to what the Sasanians historians historians had achieved to what the Sasanians historians historians historians had achieved to what the Sasanians historians historians historians historians had achieved to what the Sasanians historians historians historians historians historians had achieved to what historians historians historians historians had achieved historians historians historians historians historians historians historians had achieved historians histo and a succession had achieved achieved something what the Sasanians had achieved in the Near East. For what time in imperial Roman history, the Huns managed photo:

Indicate to what use a series of the first time in imperial Roman history, the Huns managed to unite the first time in imperial Roman neighbours into the first time number of Rome's European neighbours into the first time number of the fi first time in imperial superpower.

I large number of Rome's European neighbours into something hard hing a rival imperial superpower. large in a rival imperial superpower.

"The Whole North into Gaul"

THE FULL FEROCITY of this extraordinary new war machine was THE FULL PRINCIPLE by the east Roman Empire, whose Balkan felt in the first instance by the east Roman Empire, whose Balkan felt in the suffered heavily in 441/2 and again in 447. After the community of the 447 campaign, the east Romans had nothing left two units direction. Hence, in 449, their resorting to the assassination attempt in which Maximinus and Priscus found themselves unwittingly embroiled. Still Attila didn't let Constantinople off the hook. Having refused to settle the matter of the fugitives and repeated his demands for the establishment of a cordon sanitaire inside the Danube frontier, he now added another: that the east Romans should provide a nobly born wife (with an appropriate dowry) for his Roman-born secretary. These demands, if unsatisfied, were possible pretexts for war, and his constant agitating shows that Attila was still actively considering another major assault on the Balkans.

In 450, the diplomatic mood was to change abruptly. A new Roman embassy followed the same path north that Priscus and Maximinus had trodden the previous year. This one comprised Anatoins, one of the two most senior military commanders at the eastern court (magister militum praesentalis), and Nomus, the Master of Offices (Magister officiorum). Anatolius was well known to Attila, having negotiated the tiated the interim peace deal that had followed the Hunnic victories of 47. It is hard. 47. It is hard to think of a grander ambassadorial duo - that he should treat only - the should be t treat only with the noblest had been one of Attila's stipulations. The Roman vices of Attila's riscus: 'At first Roman view of what happened next is recorded by Priscus: 'At first Attila negocial to the number of the number of the negocial to the number of the number o Anila negotiated arrogantly, but he was overwhelmed by the number

of their gifts and mollified by their words of appeasement

Attila swore that he would keep the peace on the same territory borders. Attila swore that he would remain the Roman territory bordering the Romans did not and matter of the that he would withdraw how that he would cease to press the matter of the providing the Romans did not again receive of the press the matter of the providing the Romans did not again receive of the providing the Romans did not again receive of the press that the providing the Romans did not again receive of the press that the providing the receive of the press that the providing the receive of the press that the providing the Romans did not again receive the press that the providing the received the press that the providing the received the press that the Danube and that he would be a the matter of the fugitives ... providing the Romans did not again receive of the who fled from him. He also freed Vigilas ... I and the contract the state of the vigilas ... I and the contract th fugitives ... providing use Albania again receive the fugitives who fled from him. He also freed Vigilas of the fugitives who fled from him. He also freed Vigilas of the prisoners without ransom, gratifying Anatolic and the prisoners without ransom and the prisoners with the prisoners with the prisoners with the prisoners with the prisoners without ransom and the prisoners with the priso fugitives who fled from such fugitives who fled from without ransom, gratifying Anatolius [who were] given gifts of horses and skins of horses and large number of prisoners with and Nomus . . . [who were] given gifts of horses and skins of wild

Rarely can an international summit have had such a satisfactor of the jubilant amhan. Rarely can an international such a su outcome. Back to Collection who was to be found a suitable

what quickly emerged, however, was that Attila had settled with What quickly chief as the stereotypical barbarian he had been of his east Roman intended with been blown away by the wisdom of his east Roman interlocutors, by because he wanted a secure eastern front, having decided on a massive invasion of the Roman west.

As Priscus tells it, in launching this new attack Attila was mot vated by his hunger for further and greater conquests, thereby playing out the destiny that the gods intended for him - as his finding of the sword of Mars proclaimed - to conquer the entire world. On his embassy to the Huns, Priscus had at some point in the summer of 449 witnessed Attila acting in what seemed to him an unreasonable manner towards some ambassadors from the western Roman Empire Afterwards, the talk naturally turned to Attila's character, and Prixus quotes with approval what one of the ambassadors had to say on the matter:

[Attila's] great good fortune and the power which it had given him had made him so arrogant that he would not entertain just No proposals unless he thought that they were to his advantage. No previous ruler of Scythia ... had ever achieved so much in short a sho short a time. He ruled the islands of the Ocean [the Atlantic, or Westland in the Indian Indi west] and, in addition to the whole of Scythia, forced the Romans to pay with the scythia, forced the Romans to pay with the scythia, forced the Romans to pay with the scythia scythia. to pay tribute . . . and, in order to increase his empire further, be now wanted as now wanted to attack the Persians.53

someone then asked how Attila proposed to get to Persia from central which the reply was that the Huns remembered the which the north Black Sea coast all the more than the north Black Sea coast all the search to the north Black Sea coast all the search the north Black Sea coast all the search to the north Black Sea coast all the sea c which the reply was that the Huns remembered that, if surpose to which north Black Sea coast all the way to the end surpose, we without having to cross Roman followed with the cross Roman followe meone which the repriy was true riuns remembered that, if to which north Black Sea coast all the way to the end, you ope, wed the north having to cross Roman territory. The following there without having to cross Roman territory. purple, wed the north having to cross Roman territory. True, of without having to cross Roman territory. True, of the pull get get going via the Caucasus would be an extremely long that but going the Huns had done this - in 2007 cond, you there without caucasus would be an extremely long trek, only but going the Huns had done this - in 395/6, as far as we have the last time the Huns north of the Rhadout going via the Huns had done this - in 395/6, as far as we know out had been living north of the Black Sea, not on the gold had been living north further west And the had been much further west And the had been living north of the Black Sea, not on the control had been living north further west And the had been living north further west And the living north livi not the last time time in north of the Black Sea, not on the Great they had been living much further west. Ambitious plans of the her rian plain so much further west. they had been uving much further west. Ambitious plans of conquest, they plain so much further west. Ambitious plans of conquest, they face of it, were being drawn up on the strenoth of the face of it, they have been drawn up on the strenoth of the face of it. hungarian plain so more being drawn up on the strength of halfthungarian face of it, were was pure lust for conquest,
an the face geography: here was pure lust for conquest thurse face of 1t, which here was pure lust for conquest aching to the membered geography: here was pure lust for conquest aching to the membered geography world.

remember up the known world. allow up the know, Attila went west instead. The sources transmit a But, as we know, why he did so. According to one initial according to the init But, as we know, the did so. According to one juicy piece of court writty of reasons why he led his armies into the western Roman Empire 1. ratery of reasons will be sent the western Roman Empire because the position of the western emperor Valentinian III. a high many sent the western emperor valentinian III. posip, he led in Emperor Valentinian III, a high-spirited lady of ster of the western by the name of Iusta Grata Lionalian and the stamina by the name of Iusta Grata Lionalian III, a high-spirited lady of ster of the western by the name of Iusta Grata Honoria, offered him onsiderable stamina by the half the western Empirical and the stamina by the name of Iusta Grata Honoria, offered him onsiderable stamina by the name of Iusta Grata Honoria, offered him considerable smarriage with half the western Empire as her dowry. her hand in him a brooch with her portrait on it, along supposedly, she sent him a brooch with her portrait on it, along Supposeury, and this was enough to ensnare him. Honoria was the with a return, the formidable Galla Placidia who had a fondness for daughter of the formidable Galla Placidia who had a fondness for caugurer of the charge of the bome a son to Alaric's brother-in-law Athaulf in the 410s. Placidia, with her Gothic bodyguard, had had what it took to play a major political role, until Aetius took over.

Having fallen pregnant, her daughter Honoria was caught in an ilicit love affair with her business manager, a certain Eugenius. Eugenius was executed, and Honoria removed from public life and betrothed to a dull senator by the name of Herculianus. It was in her distress and frustration that she had written to the lord of the Huns and asked him to rescue her. But the story gives one pause. Even after it was discovered that she had written to Attila she escaped death, and was handed over to the custody of her mother; but before, irritatingly, breaking off in mid-sentence, the pertinent Priscus fragment hints that further escapades followed. Honoria's antics are too well documented for there not to be some grain of truth in them,54 but I don't believe that she was the reason why Attila eventually preferred the west Roman to the Persian option. Just consider the geography. As we will the in a more the in a moment, having decided to attack the west, Attila did not rush wards ltaly, where Honoria was incarcerated, but first attacked Gaul. While no doubt sketchy, Attila's knowledge of European good enough for us to be sure he knew on which side geography the arrow who of the arrow who are the arrow who of the arrow who are the arr While no doubt sketchy, Attua's Michael of European was good enough for us to be sure he knew on which side geographics likely to find his putative bride. We don't know what like he had he will be to find he will be will be to find he will be to find he will be to find he will be will be to find he will be to find he will be was good enough for us to be sure in which which side seems he was likely to find his putative bride. We don't know what what when then left into Italy, and that's the Hungary. he was likely to find his putative bride. We don't know what the impened to Honoria. Heading west out of Hungary, the Hungary towards Gaul rather than left into Italy, and that's enough to a historical footnote. happened to Honoria. Heading west into Italy, and that's enough to relegate Honoria to a historical footnote.

The rescuing Honoria was only the Honoria was only the rescuing Honoria was only the Ho

If to relegate Honoria to a miscouring Honoria was only one of seven The sources indicate that rescaled the was only one of seven reasons proposed for Attila's invasion of the west. Another was the conversation in the reasons proposed for Attua's management of the conversation in the concerning personal to the concerni issue that had prompted his possible ambitions concerning persia had been sent to a se summer of 449 in which has personal to that a Roman banker by the name of Silvanus has been sent to answer been raised. That particular week by the name of silvanus was he charge that a Roman banker by the name of silvanus was in some gold plate that was Attila's by right of come possession of some gold plate that was Attila's by right of conquest the matter was, Attila was threatening war if it possession of some gold place.

Trivial though the matter was, Attila was threatening war if it was not conquest.

There are also vague, but quite converted. Trivial though the matter was, settled to his satisfaction. There are also vague, but quite convincing of contact at this date between Attila and Contact at the date between settled to his sausiacutom.

hints of some kind of contact at this date between Attila and Geiseng hints of some kind of contact at this date between Attila and Geiseng king of the Vandals, who is said to have bribed Attila to turn his armies westwards. Late in 450, Attila backed a different candidate for the recently vacant kingship of the Ripuarian Franks from the one Aetius had chosen to support. He had also recently given sanctuary to one of the leaders of a rebellion in north-west Gaul defeated by Aetius in 448. This suggests that Attila had in mind the possibility of using him to stir up trouble and to smooth the path of any Hunnic army operating in the west. Once his armies were on the move, in much the same vein the Hun sent out some mutually contradictory letters to different recipients, some of which claimed that the purpose of his campaign was to attack not the western Empire but the Visigoths of south-west Gaul, while others urged those same Visigoths to join him in attacking the Empire.55

What emerges, therefore, is that Attila was simultaneously juggling with several possible pretexts for an attack on the western Empire in attack on Persia was ever seriously contemplated I doubt, but in 449 he still hadn't decided whether to launch his next assault upon the eastern or the western half of the Empire; and he was not only stiring up trouble with the west, but also refusing to settle outstanding issued Conwith Constantinople. The generous treaty he eventually granted Constantinople and in the stantinople was the sign that he was ready to tie up loose ends in the east, having set his sights on the west.

Attila's massive army surged westwards out of the following the route taken by the DL. probably following the army consists a probably that the army consists a probably the probably that the army consists a probably that the probably the probably that the army consists a probably that the probably the probably that the probably that the probably the probably the probably the probably that the probably the pro of the print as illassive army surged westwards out of the Rhine following the route taken by the Rhine panube, probably that the army consisted of a staggering half planube, it is said that the army consisted of a staggering half wildle of 406. It is said that the army consisted of a staggering half reported Jordanes, in his choice of the large of the out of the route taken by the Rhine panube, proparly that the army consisted of a staggering half-wide of 406. It is said that the army consisted of a staggering half-wide of 406. The property of the figure; but the same he didn't believe the figure; but the same he didn't believe the figure. "It is said that the arrive consisted of a staggering halfwidth of 406. It is said that the arrive consisted of a staggering halfinduction of reported Jordanes, in his choice of words revealing that
induction men, reported Jordanes, in his choice of words revealing that
induction men, he didn't believe the figure; but there is no doubring the force, or that Attila was drawing the force, or that Attila was drawing the force of moders of the force, or that Attila was drawing on the full resonant machine. As Sidonius Accient philon file he didn't believe the figure; but there is no doubting the didn't believe the figure; but there is no doubting the force, or that Attila was drawing on the full resources for once of the force, or that Attila was drawing on the full resources machine. As Sidonius Apollinaris, a more file file force, but it: of the force, of the force, war machine. As Sidonius Apollinaris, a more or less of the Hunnic Gallic poet, put it:

of the running Gallic poet, put it: Suddenly the barbarian world, rent by a mighty upheaval, poured suddenly the barbarian Gaul. After the warlike Ruoise Suddenly the Dailbailtan Gaul. After the warlike Rugian comes the whole north into Gelonian close by; the Rugian comes the Conid. with the Gelonian close by; the whole norm has Gelonian close by; the Burgundian urges ferce Gepid, with the Gelonian the Hun the Ballferce Gepia, with the German and rush the Hun, the Bellonotian, the the Bastarnian, the Thuringian the Bennetted the Bastarnian, the Thuringian the Bennetted the Bastarnian, the Thuringian the Bennetted the Bastarnian the Bennetted the Bastarnian the Bennetted the Bastarnian the Bennetted the Bastarnian t on the Schlain, the Bastarnian, the Thuringian, the Bructeran, and the Neurian,

Sidonius was writing metred poetry, and required names of the right sidonius was what to make it work. What he gives us here is an length and stress to make it work. length and the literesting mixture of ancient groups who had nothing to do with the Humic Empire (Gelonian, Bellonotian, Neurian, Bastarnian, Bructeran) and real subjects of Attila (Rugian, Gepid, Burgundian, Scirian, Thuringan and Frank), not to mention, of course, the Huns themselves. But, in essence, Sidonius was spot on. And we know from other sources that large numbers of Goths were also present.58

No surviving source describes the campaign in detail, but we know roughly what happened. Having followed the Upper Danube northwestwards out of the Great Hungarian Plain, the horde crossed the Rhine in the region of Coblenz and continued west (map 13). According to some admittedly fairly dubious sources, the city of Metz fell on ⁷April, shortly followed by the old imperial capital of Trier. The army then thrust into the heart of Roman Gaul. By June, it was outside the dty of Orléans, where a considerable force of Alans in Roman service had their headquarters. The city was placed under heavy siege; there are hints that Attila was hoping to lure Sangibanus, king of some of the Alans based in the city, over to his side. 59 At the same time, according to another pretty dubious source, elements of the army had also reached the gates of Paris, where they were driven back by the miraculous intervention of the city's patron Saint Genevieve. It looks as if the 11 as if the Hunnic army was swarming far and wide over Roman Gaul, looting and ransacking as it went.

Actius was still generalissimo of the west, and as we know the west from at least 443. Wh. Possible Merobaudes' second panegyric, he had been anticipating the know the later he sprang into the west from at least 443. When it was the possible to the possible to the sprang into the possible to the possible to the sprang into the sprang in Merobaudes' second panegyine, and a least second panegyine, and of a Hunnic assault on the west from at least 443. When the possible to not toosther action, Panel in the possible to not toosther. of a Hunnic assault on une materialized, nearly a decade later, he sprang into action, have it for a coalition action. Faced materialized, nearly a decade later, and some action, and stand some chance of success. Early summer 451 and some of the notingents of the this enormous threat, he surve that would stand some chance of success. Early summer 451 that would stand some chance advancing north through Gaul with contingents of the Roman and Gaul, plus forces from many allied groups, such and groups, of Italy and Gaul, plus loces.

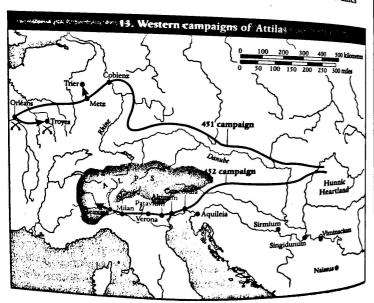
Burgundians and the Aquitainian Visigoths under their king Theoderic their king Theoderic compelled Abat Burgundians and the Aquitanna.

On 14 June, the approach of this motley force compelled Athler in the same month, Aetilin' On 14 June, the approach withdrawal from Orléans. Later in the same month, Aetily has somewhere in the vicini withdrawal from Oricans.

caught up with the retreating horde somewhere in the vicinity of

On a plain called by different sources the Catalaunian fields of the conclusively identical fields of On a piam cancer by campus Mauriacus, which has never been conclusively identified, a huge

The battlefield was a plain rising by a sharp slope to a ridge, which both armies sought to gain . . . The Huns with their forces seized the right side, the Romans, the Visigoths and their allies



ATTILA THE HUN ... The battleline of the Huns was so arranged that Attila the left in the centre . . . The innumerable tribes, which he had enhine tribes, which he had enhine tribes. The battlemise were in the centre... The innumerable which he had subjected to his swand his bravest tribes, which he had subjected to his swand his of diverse tribes. the len bravest followers which he had subjected to his sway, so the len bravest followers which he had subjected to his sway, so the peoples of diverse wings.

former Visigoths reached the ridge first and thwarted every the Romans and Visigoths so our main source tells us, but then the ridge first and thwarted every main to dislodge them - so our main source tells us, but then the ridge first and thwarted every many to dislodge them. The Romans and Visigouis - so our main source tells us, but then lapses the Romans dislodge them - so our main source tells us, but then lapses after the dislodge them betoric (though pretty good rhetoric it is): attempt to assume pretty good rhetoric it is):

The fight grew fierce, confused, monstrous, unrelenting – a fight whose like no and banks ... was swollen by a strange stream and between low banks torrent by the flow of blood. Those will store a torrent by the flow of blood. between low parish by the flow of blood. Those whose wounds named into a torrent by the parching thirst decal numed into a tortion to slake their parching thirst drank water mingled drove them to slake their parching thirst drank water mingled

Theoderic was killed in the fighting, either struck by a spear or Theoderic was a spear or the spea trampleu to describing. Again according to our main source, a total of death are confusing. death are conditioned, but this figure is nonsense. At the end of the day's 105,000 men and any signing, Attila was distraught. Forced back inside a defensive wagon drde, for the first time ever his army had suffered a major defeat. His mitial reaction was to heap up saddles to make his own funeral pyre.60 But his lieutenants persuaded him that the battle was only a tactical check, and he relented. A stalemate followed, with the two armies facing each other, until the Huns began slowly to retreat. Aetius didn't press them too hard, and disbanded his coalition of forces as quickly as possible - a task made much easier by the fact that the Visigoths were keen to return to Toulouse to sort out the succession to their dead king. Attila consented to his army's continued withdrawal and, tails between their legs, the Huns returned to Hungary. Although the cost to the Roman communities in the Huns' line of march was enormous, Attila's first assault on the west had been repulsed. Yet again, Actius had delivered at the moment of crisis. Despite the limited resources available, he had put together a coalition that had saved Gaul.

In his wrath, the Hun spent the winter of 451/2 limbering up for yet more violence. This time the blow fell on Italy. In the spring of 452, his force broke through the Alpine passes. The first obstacle in their past. their path was Aquileia. Here they were held up by the city's massive defences - Attila even contemplated calling off the whole campaign.

On the point of bringing their long and frustrating slege to a stork shipping its young out of the nest that it had built had On the point of bringing their long and materialing slege to saw a stork shipping its young out of the nest that it had built of the city's towers, carrying one by one those that it had built of the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be seeing this, Priscus tells us, 'he ordered his army to remain the bird would never have gone still he blace... Unlarge the place... Unlarge the place... Unlarge the place of the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the place... Unlarge the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the place... Unlarge the city's towers, carrying one by one those those that couldn't be the place... Unlarge the city's towers, carrying one by one those those those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city's towers, carrying one by one those that couldn't be the city of the city's towers, carrying one by one those the city of the c Seeing this, Priscus tells us, the order have gone same place, saying that the bird would never have gone still in the mention Attila). Was a very thouse same place, saying that the one would strike the place very short of course (not to mention Attila), was right the short the strongholds was foretelling that some disaster.

Was foretelling that some disaster.

The stork, of course (not to mention Attila), was right the story shorts at taking fortified strongholds prevailed, and have The stork, of course (not to main the story), was right. The precocious skill at taking fortified strongholds prevailed. The precocious skill at taking fortified strongholds prevailed. The process of the main that the main tha precocious skill at taking iorune prevailed, and the prevailed, and Adulta fell to them in short order. Its capture opened up the main route in

th-eastern Italy.

The horde then followed the ancient Roman roads west across the western Empt. The horde then romowed the political heartlands of the western Empire at rich, this region was endowed with many brine. Po Plain. One of the political agriculturally rich, this region was endowed with many prosperty of in the Balkans, one after the other these cities. agriculturally rich, this region.

cities. Now, as in the Balkans, one after the other these cities followed they took in swift succession Padua, Mantha to cities. Now, as in the painting, the Huns, and they took in swift succession Padua, Mantua, Vicentia and Rergamo (map 13). Now Attila was at al. Verona, Brescia and Bergamo (map 13). Now Attila was at the gate of Milan, a long-time imperial capital. The siege was protracted by of Milan, a long-time and another centre of Empire was looted by again Attila triumphed, and another centre of Empire was looted and sacked. A fragment of Priscus' history preserves a nice vignette;

When [Attila] saw [in Milan] in a painting the Roman Emperors sitting upon golden thrones and Scythians lying dead before their feet, he sought out a painter and ordered him to paint Attila upon a throne and the Roman emperors heaving sacks upon their shoulders and pouring out gold before his feet.

But, as in Gaul the previous year, Attila's Italian campaign failed to go entirely to plan. Papal sources and Hollywood scriptwriters love to focus on one incident in particular when, after the capture of Milan Pope Leo, as part of a peace embassy that included the Prefet Trygetius and ex-consul Avienus, met Attila to try to persuade im not to attack the city of Rome. In the end, the Huns did tum back retreating to Hungary once again.

In some circles this went down as a great personal triumph for the Pope in face-to-face diplomacy. Reality was more prosaic. Other forces apart from the God-guided Leo were at work. Attila's Italian campaign essentially a series of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in their actions of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in the sieges of sieges, lacked substantial logistic support, and in the sieges of sie in their often cramped conditions the Hunnic army was vulnerable more warm at more ways than one. The chronicler Hydatius put it succinctly.

Huns who be a sometimed. Huns who had been plundering Italy and who had also stormed!

were victims of divine punishment, being visited with and some kind of disease.' By the disease was taking a heavy to 11 number of cities, were victims of the punishment, being visited with some kind of disease. By the time disease was taking a heavy toll, and food running captured, disease was taking a heavy toll, and food running was captured. Also, Constantinople now have disasters: maintenance wind of disease. By the time was taking a heavy toll, and food running captured, disease was taking a heavy toll, and food running captured. Also, Constantinople now had a new rule-wild was short. Also, together wild and his forces, together wild and his forces, together wild and his forces. me time a neavy toll, and food running a neavy toll, and food running was captured. Also, Constantinople now had a new ruler, the milian was short. Also, forces, together with what Aetius could have from idle: 'In addition felton forces, together with what Aetius could have from idle: 'In addition felton felton from idle: 'In addition felton felton from idle: 'In addition felton felton felton felton from idle: 'In addition felton felt wild was short. Also, together with what Aetius could put singerously short and his forces, together with what Aetius could put singerously marcian, and his forces, together with what Aetius could put singerously were far from idle: 'In addition, [the Huns] were slaughter, were far from idle: 'Marcian and his the Emperor Marcian and the the Emperor Marcian, and his forces, together with what Aetius could put mere far from idle: 'In addition, [the Huns] were slaughtered mere, were far by the Emperor Marcian and led by Aetine mere crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were could be applied to the same were crushed in their could be applied to the same were crushed in the same way and the same were crushed in the same way and the same way are crushed in the same way and the same way are crushed in the same way are crushed in the same way are crushed in the same way and the same way are crushed in th of Marcian 162 In the army of Marcian 162 In the ogether sent by the crushed in their settlements by both heavenby sum time they were crushed in their settlements by both heavenbe same time and the army of Marcian. '62 It looks as though with the disasters and the army because he will be sent to the same he will be same to the same to the same he will be same to the same he will be same to the same to the same to the same to the same he will be same to the same t by same time they was being harassed by Aetius leading a initial was bei the disasters and the was being harassed by Aetius leading a joint eastthurnic army in Italy was being harassed by Aetius leading a joint eastforce, other eastern forces were launching a raid nonforce, phunic army in Italy other eastern forces were launching a raid north of the mest force, other easternal. The combination was death force, other and a raid north of the panule, into Attila's heartland. The combination was deadly, and, as panule, into Attila's the Hun had no choice but to retreat the panule, are vious year, the Hun had no choice but to retreat the panule. punbe, into huna see Hun had no choice but to retreat. With some in the previous year, the Hun had no choice but to retreat. With some in the previous year, the Hun had no choice but to retreat. With some in the previous year, the Hun had no choice but to retreat. in the previous year, truce in operation, his army rolled back into central and of peace or truce in operation, his army rolled back into central

15 451 was itself no more than a tactical check, two major defeats Burope.63 If 451 was a substantial dent in the great conqueror's many years put a substantial dent in the great conqueror's in as many 7. These western campaigns were much more difficult to reputation. These western campaigns were much more difficult to reputation. In fact, than Attila's Balkan adventures of the previous decade. The Hunnic Empire did not have the bureaucratic machinery of its Roman counterpart, however lumbering that might be. As far as we know, it ran to one Roman-supplied secretary at a time, and a prisoner called Rusticius who was kept for his skill at writing letters in Greek and Latin. Nothing suggests that the Huns had any equivalent, therefore, of the Romans' capacity for planning and putting in place the necessary logistic support, in terms of food and fodder, for major campaigns. No doubt, when the word went out to assemble for war, each warrior was expected to bring a certain amount of food along with him, but as the campaign dragged on, the Hunnic army was bound to be living mainly off the land. Hence, in campaigns over longer distances, the difficulties involved in maintaining the army as an effective fighting force increased exponentially. Fatigue as well as the likelihood of food shortages and disease increased with distance. There was also every chance that the army would spread so widely over an unfamiliar landscape in search of supplies that it would be difficult to concentrate for battle. In 447, during the widest-reaching of the Balkan campaigns, for their first major battle Attila's armies had marched west along the northern line of the Haemus Mountains, west along the northern line of the Haemus

the result of the section of the sec

west to the Chersonesus for their second: a total distance of some kilometres. In 451, the army had to cover the of some hout 1,200 kilometres; and in 452 changes west to the Chersonesus for the strong had to cover the of something to Orléans, about 1,200 kilometres; and in 452 from the distance from the distance from the distance from the first time they were lavin. like 500 kilometres. In 451, use array and to cover the distance from the distance f Hungary to Orléans, about 1,200 kilometres, and in 452 from the to Milan, perhaps 800, but this time they were laying siege to disease at the mented, in campaigns covering such van the Hungary to Milan, perhaps 800, but une the susceptible to disease at the susceptible to disease went, which made them yet most to disease at the historians have commented, in campaigns covering such vast distance were almost historians have been experienced as the such vast distance to disease at the historians have commented. historians have commented, in Carry Buch value of the lesson. Early in 453, have bound to

erience serious setbacks.

But Attila didn't learn the lesson. Early in 453, he was on the hing vet another destructive campaign across the Burney But Attila didn't learn use resource campaign across the was on the of launching yet another destructive campaign across the Butope when finally the scourge of God went to meet his employed of launching yet another uccourge of God went to meet his employed another wife (we don't know how many he know landscape, when finally use second landscape, which is second landscape, which is second landscape, and the second landscape landscape, which is second landscape, and the second landscape, which is second landscape, and the second landscape, which is second landscape, and the second landscape, a He had just taken anounce when the drank too much, burst a blood very bride was too scared to raise the alarm, and was too total). On his wedding mg.r. and to raise the alarm, and was found and died. His bride was too scared to raise the alarm, and was found and died. His bride was an orgy of mo... and died. His bride was too beside the corpse in the morning. The funeral was an orgy of mounting as Iordanes describes:

His body was placed ... in state in a silken tent ... The best horsemen of the entire tribe of the Huns rode around in circles ... and told of his deeds[:] "The Chief of the Huns, King Attila born of his father Mundiuch, lord of the bravest tribes, sole possessor of the Scythian and German realms - powers previously unknown - captured cities and terrified both empires of the Roman world and, appeased by their entreaties, took annual tribute to save the rest from plunder. And when he had accomplished all this ... he fell not by wound of the foe, nor by treachery of friends, but in the midst of his nation at peace, happy in his joy and without sense of pain.'

When the wake had finished:

In the secrecy of the night they buried his body in the earth. They bound his coffins, the first with gold, the second with silver and the third with the strength of iron ... iron because he subdued the nations, gold and silver because he received the honour of both empires. They also added the arms of foemen won in the fight, trappings of rare worth, sparkling with various gems, and ornaments of all sorts ... then ... they slew those appointed w the work.65

The Huns and Rome assemble and a street words

The super separated two great mounts as we are the first, as we are the super price of the Hunnic world of the rise of the Hunnic metals be broken down into three phases. The first, as we saw in supplier on and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories 4 and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two great moments of crisis memories and 5, generated two greated two The first, as we saw in the broken down the two great moments of crisis on the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the Roman Empire, during 376-80 and 405-8, foreign the supple of the s moments of crisis on the special and so great moments of crisis on the special and so great moments of crisis on the special and so great moments of crisis on the special and so great moments of crisis on the special speci the Roman the establishment of enclaves of unsubdued fonter for the soil the establishment of enclaves of unsubdued fonter upon its soil these enclaves in turn created new property upon The existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of these enclaves in turn created new property upon the existence of the e fortier upon its soil the enclaves in turn created new and, as stept upon The existence of these enclaves in turn created new and, as the same in Chapter 6, hugely damaging centrifugal forces with the same in t The existence of hugely damaging centrifugal forces within the second phase, in the generation 1. The second phase in the generation 1. More the Chapter of the second phase, in the generation before the body politic. In the second phase, in the generation before the Huns evolved from invaders into empire-builders in the second phase, in the generation before prince, body political from invaders into empire-builders in central house the Huns evolved from invaders into Roman territors and the flow of refugees into Roman territors. httla, the Huns evolution of refugees into Roman territory ceased. The httla, and the flow to exploit, and strove to bring potential wanted subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential to exploit. and the months and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit, and strove to bring potential candi-gurope, and subjects to exploit to explo Huns wanted subjects to oring potential candi-huns wanted control. In this era, too, Constantius and Aetius were able hates the use of Hunnic power to control the immigrant butes under control. In power to control the immigrant groups who nake use of Hunnic power to control the immigrant groups who make use of Hunnic power to control the immigrant groups who make use of Hunnic power to control the immigrant groups who make use of these groups was actually destroyed the Huns. bd previously crossed groups was actually destroyed, however, the since none of these groups two of the Hunnic impacts of phase two of the Hunnic impacts of the phase two of since none of the Hunnic impact upon the Roman pullative effects of phase two of the Hunnic impact upon the Roman palliative the damage done in phase one.

Artila's massive military campaigns of the 440s and early 450s mark the third phase in Hunnic-Roman relations. Their effects, as one might epect, were far-reaching. The east Roman Empire's Balkan provinces were devastated, with thousands killed as one stronghold after another was taken. As the remains of Nicopolis ad Istrum so graphically show, Roman administration might be restored but not so the Latin- and Greek-speaking landowning class that had grown up over the preceding four centuries. The Gallic campaign of 451, and particularly the assault upon Italy in 452, inflicted enormous damage upon those unfortunate enough to find themselves in the Huns' path.

But if we step back from the immediate drama and consider the Roman state in broader terms, Attila's campaigns, though serious, were an life-threatening. The eastern half of the Roman Empire depended on the tax it collected from a rich arc of provinces stretching from Asia Minor to Egypt, territories out of reach of the Huns. For all the latter's technology, the triple landwalls surrounding Constantinople made the eastern capital impregnable; and the Huns had no navy to the them across the narrow straits that separated the Balkans from the rich provinces of Asia. A similar situation prevailed in the west. By the time of Attila, it was already feeling a heavy financial seen, but given the logistic limitations of the Hunnic arms nowhere near to conquering it. In fact, this the time of Attila, it was already recards a recardy financial have seen, but given the logistic limitations of the Hunnic hine. Attila came nowhere near to conquering it. In fact, to indirectly inflicted upon the structure fact, factoring in the structure factoring in the the time of Acceptable the logistic managers of the Hunnic machine, Attila came nowhere near to conquering it. In fact, the structures of have seen, Dut 5 machine, Attila came nowhere near to conquering it. In fact, have serious damage was indirectly inflicted upon the structures of the influx of armed immigrants between 376 and 408. Moreover effects of the age of Attila that have been to be a serious damage. machine, Atma serious damage was indirectly immediate apon the structure, far the by the influx of armed immigrants between 376 and 408. Moreover of the west Roman state. Because, the because the terms of the state of the state. by the influx of armed immigration by the influx of armed immigration was again the indirect effects of the age of Attila that Moreove the integrity of the west Roman state. Because here the was again the indirect effects of the West Roman state. Because he had less time and the last to the Roman west and he had be stime and he had be threat to the integrity of the west to the integrity of the west to the Roman west in the last to the Roman west to the Roman concentrate on dealing with factoring, concentrate on dealing with factoring to the Roman west time and the resources for tackling other threats to the Roman west in the last other threats cost the western Empire much more dealing to the first and 452. The first and western the last other threats of 451 and 452. The first and western the last other threats of 451 and 452. resources for tackling other united resources for tackling other united and these other threats cost the western Empire much in the tackling the Hunnic invasions of 451 and 452. The first and more death most seem of the reconquest of the reconque And these other threats cost and the Hunnic invasions of 451 and 452. The first and most death the enforced abandonment of the reconquest of North Act than the Hunnic invasions of the reconquest of North Africa

n the Vandals.

In such circumstances, most unfortunately, Aetius could give into the Vandals.

There, the departure of the Vandals. In such circumstances, most could give by help to the Iberian peninsula. There, the departure of the Vandals in some restoration of Roman order, and some reclamation of Roman order, and some reclamation of Roman order. help to the Iberian permission.

429 had seen some restoration of Roman order, and some reclamation that had been lost in the 410s. The Hispanic reclamation of the revenues that had been lost in the 410s. The Hispanic province and, if no match for the abundance of of the revenues used have loped, and, if no match for the abundance of the North Africa, were still a valued contributor to western coffers, in the North Amca, were sum a sum of direct Roman control in the north-east, as the Vandala control except for Tarraconensis in the north-east, as the Vandals, Alans and Suevi shared out the rest. After 429, only the Suevi remained in large numbers, confined to the least prosperous north-western upland zone of Gallaecia. Aetius, like his predecessors, was happy to leave them there, seeing no need to risk valuable troops for its recovery. Instead he concentrated his efforts on restoring order and on maintaining the flow of funds from the richer provinces abandoned by the Vandals and Alans, until he was interrupted by Geiseric's seizure of Carthage.

Under their new king Rechila, who succeeded his father in 438, the Suevi took advantage of Aetius' preoccupation with North Africa to expand their dominion. In 439, they moved out of Gallaecia to take Merida, the main city of the neighbouring province of Lusitania. In 440, they captured Aetius' military commander and main represent tive in the peninsula, the comes (count) Censorius. In 441, they took Seville and extended their control over the whole of Baetica and Carthaginiensis. The lack of any concerted response from Aetius, who was now frantically gathering his forces in Sicily, gave local self-local sel groups, the Bagaudae, the chance to undermine central control in part of Tames of Tarraconensis, the one province still in imperial hands. As had been

ATTILA THE HUN SA MIST Gaul, these uprisings were probably assertions of local in Gaul, the imperial grip was perceived to be slipping in the imperial grip was perceived to be slipping in the revolts, led by one Basilius in Transfer at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Transfer at a time of the revolts. Gaul, these uprising were probably assertions of local Gaul, the imperial grip was perceived to be slipping. In the imperial grip was perceived to be slipping. When the imperial grip was perceived to be slipping. In the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasa at a time revolts) at a time revolts a when the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of local of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts, led by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona) of the revolts o by one Basilius in Tyriasso (Tirasona)

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solution of the revolus in the revolus in the revolus in the revolus in the rev fullest on to have lavource a suevic takeover, perhaps because it to have way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had seemed the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had to be the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace, just as Gallic landowners had the best way to guarantee peace with the best way to guarantee peace

peace, just as G peace, just as G production in Spain went from bad to an analysis of the peace, just as G production in Spain went from bad to an analysis of the peace, just as G oped und Athault the vision went from bad to worse, then, between 439 ported and the flow of tax revenue dried up. Even after the and the flow of tax revenue dried up. supported in Span value to worse, then, between 439 me situation in Span value of tax revenue dried up. Even after making the situation the flow of tax was little Aetius could do. I amount the vandals, there was little Aetius could do. I amount with the vandals, there was little Aetius could do. I amount of the question. the How of the was little Actius could do. Large-scale with the Vandals, there was little Actius could do. Large-scale with the was out of the question. A series of commander when the was out of the question with the was out of the question. and with the vanuage, the question. A series of commanders were percention was out of the question. A series of commanders were percention was out of the question. Assurius in 442, Merobaudes himself in 443, and Viscobaudes Concentration of Spain: Assurius in 442, Merobaudes concentration of the question of the question. peace of commanders were of spain: Asturius in 442, Merobaudes himself in 443, and Vitus in and Nerobaudes concentrated on defeating the Romanders were applied to Spain: Asturius and Merobaudes concentrated on defeating the Romanders were applied to Spain: Asturius and Merobaudes concentrated on defeating the Romanders were applied to Spain: Asturius and Merobaudes and Asturius and Merobaudes are least to the spain and the spain are least to the spain interior Spain: Asturius and Merobaudes concentrated on defeating the Bagaudae, and Asturius and Merobaudes to Tarraconensis. Virus' London at least to Tarraconensis. Asturius and ivicious as to hold on at least to Tarraconensis. Vitus' brief was presumably so as to hold on the strategy of the 410s, he led a mobilious. Repeating the strategy of the 410s, he led a mobilious. presumably so as Repeating the strategy of the 410s, he led a combined more ambitious. Repeating the Carthaginiensis and Baetica prote ambitious. Repeated into Carthaginiensis and Baetica. Our main gomano-Visigothic force into Hydatius, complains about Romano Visigotinic Romano Visigotini Romano phormant, the visitor attitude was perhaps shaped by the expedition's plundering, but his attitude was perhaps shaped by the expedition's when Vitus' force met the Suevi in battle plundering, but was force met the Suevi in battle, it was routed.

outcome. When Vitus' force met the Suevi in battle, it was routed. outcome. Which had, in fact, scraped together what Hydatius calls a 'not heis' had, of troops for Vitus in the Actius hau, in he importance he accorded to mentions calls a not inconsiderable to the importance he accorded to retrieving the Hispanic testimony to the importance he accorded to retrieving the Hispanic testimony to the clearly could not do, however, was bring down on revenues. revenues. the full weight of the remaining western field armies, since they had to be kept in reserve to defend the Empire against Attila. This defeat confirmed the Suevi in their possession of most of the peninsula; and once again the bulk of Hispanic revenues were lost.67

Roman Britain, too, was in its death throes. Although, despite the letter of Honorius in 410 'urging [the British] to fend for themselves' (p. 245), the Empire had no pretensions to direct control there. Roman He had survived in parts of the province, and there was a fair amount of informal contact between Romano-Britons and their continental counterparts. In 429, then again in the early 440s, Bishop Germanus of Auterre made trips to the island to help native Christians combat the influence of Pelagian heretics.68 But heresy wasn't the only problem facing this last generation of Romano-Britons: raiders from Ireland (the Scots) and Scotland (the Picts) were troubling the western and northern finges of the province, and Saxons from across the North Sea also to its wealth. The latter had been a worry since at least the third

347

century, and their incursions had prompted the construction of portchester and southern shores. Some of portchester as some of portcheste century, and their incursions nau prompted the construction fortifications along the eastern and southern shores. Some of portchester and country in the transfer of the trans fortifications along the eastern and southern shores. Some still stand today, notably the forts of Portchester and Caerley in the troubled to the stroubled to the southern than the troubled to the southern than the s still stand today, notably the rolling authority in the troubled work of the cities continued to the c don't know who was exercising don't know who was exercising sub-Roman Britain, but for a generation or so the cities troubled from the cities some tax revenues in kind or world or monk Gildas.

A sixth-century British source, the monk Gildas, reports in kind of Britain that power eventuals in kind of Britain that power A sixth-century British source, appropriately named On the Ruin of Britain that power eventually to hands of an unnamed tyrant, whom Bede names as Vorking to the state of the appropriately named On the Name of an unnamed tyrant, whom Bede names as Voriginal to the hands of an unnamed tyrant, whom Bede names as Voriginal to the survivine su into the hands of an unnamed by the surviving of the solution of the surviving of the solution of the sol He and a 'council' (pernaps of the much threatened, much raided, Romanon. councils) decided that employing to the problems of the much threatened, much raided, Romano-British of what happened next is told in outline by Gildae The story of what happened next is told in outline by Gildas, who moral tale for his own times, but, as far as it pro-The story of what nappened was writing a moral tale for his own times, but, as far as it goes, the

The [Saxons] ... asked to be given supplies, falsely representing themselves as soldiers ready to undergo extreme dangers for their excellent hosts. The supplies were granted and for a long time 'shut the dog's mouth'. Then they again complained that ther monthly allowance was insufficient . . . and swore that they would break their agreement and plunder the whole island unless more lavish payment were heaped upon them. There was no delay. they put their threats into immediate effect.

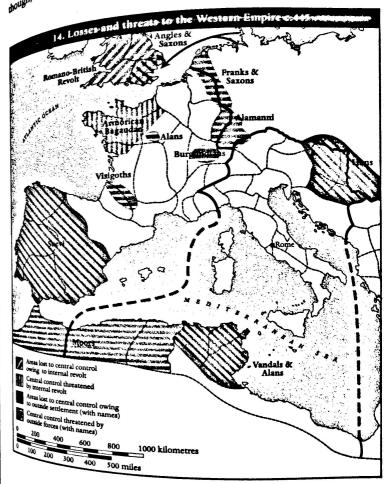
And the result:

All the major towns were laid low by the repeated battering of enemy rams; laid low, too, all the inhabitants - church leaders, priests and people alike, as the swords glinted all around and the flames crackled ... In the middle of the squares the foundationstones of high walls and towers that had been torn from their lofty base, holy altars, fragments of corpses covered with a purple crust of congealed blood looked as though they had been mixed up in some dreadful wine-press.

Gildas does not date the revolt - actually, he doesn't explicitly date anything anything - but two chronicles written in Gaul, whose knowledged events in Barrier and confidence of the confidence of th events in Britain demonstrates the continued cross-Channel contains also evident in the continued cross-Channel contains a contai also evident in the Life of St Germanus, note that conditions turned seriously nagre : seriously nasty in what remained of Roman Britain round about the

Faced with an ever-worsening situation, the Romano-British be taken back under the imperial.

The date of the land paced with an ever-worsening situation, the Romano-British be taken back under the imperial wing, final appeal to Aetius. The date of the letter is controversial to Aetius at that point as 'three to Aetius at the Aetius at rest with final appear to Aetius. The date of the letter is controversial, but made formally to Aetius at that point as 'three times consul' Active to Aetius at that point as 'three times consul' Active time in 446. so if Cal' post of the formally to Aetius at that point as 'three times consul'. Aetius of the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is according to the third time in 4 of the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, which consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate, cilds consul for the third time in 446, so if Gildas' usage is accurate. cities consul for the transfer appeal arrived just as he was anxiously scanning the Danube for appeal arrived prewing Hunnic tempest. Even if Gildas is the appeal of the brewing holds. Agricus be appeal arrived just Hunnic tempest. Even if Gildas is wrong, the appeal of the brewing Hunnic tempest. Even if Gildas is wrong, and signs of the general point holds. Actius was facing too many in the general point holds. the arr of the provided holds. Actius was facing too many threats any signs the general point holds.



elsewhere to be able to answer the last desperate call of Roman Plant. The western Empire had a where to the tain. The western Empire had by 452 long provinces of North Africa. The whole of British The picture was bleak. The substantial percentage of its provinces (map 14): the whole of long to the Visigoths, plus somether p substantial percentage of its provinces of North Africa, those parties western Gaul ceded to the Visigoths, plus south eastern with the control of the castern of the control of the castern of the caste most of Spain, the richest province most of Spain, the richest province, those part of the Burgundians. Furthermore, much of the rest had a last decade or so, and the rest had a south-western Gaul ceded to the Burgundians. Furthermore, much of the rest had saving fighting in the last decade or so, and the revenues to the revenue to the revenu ceded to the Burgunaians. Seen serious fighting in the last decade or so, and the rest had the revenues too would have been substantially reduced to The problem in the pro seen serious fighting in the most these areas too would have been substantially reduced the revenues from the problem overwhelming. The problem is the Huns' inch these areas too would have become overwhelming. The problem of diminishing funds had become overwhelming. The Huns' indicates the process of attrition, in having originally pushed manually p of diminishing funds nau become role in this process of attrition, in having originally pushed many of immigrants across the frontier, did far more harm the role in this process of activities, and far more harm than any of the armed immigrants across the frontier, did far more harm than any of

PART THREE

FALL OF EMPIRES

THE FALL OF ATTILA'S EMPIRE is an extraordinary story in its own 1918 FALL OF ATTILA'S EMPIRE is an extraordinary story in its own right. Up to about AD 350, the Huns had figured not at all in European 350–410, the only Huns most Romans had encountifully During 350–410, the only Huns most Romans had encountifully were a few raiding parties. Ten years later, Huns in significant numbers had established themselves west of the Carpathian Mountains of the Great Hungarian Plain, but they still functioned mostly as the Hungarian Plain, but they still functioned mostly as the sufful allies to the Roman state. In 441, when Attila and Bleda launched useful allies to the Roman frontier, the ally revealed his new their first attack across the Roman frontier, the ally revealed his new heir first attack across the Huns had risen from nowhere to European colours. In forty years, the Huns had risen from nowhere to European colours. By anyone's standards, this was spectacular. But the superpower. By anyone's standards, this was spectacular. But the superpower. By anyone's standards, this was spectacular still. By 469, just collapse of Attila's Empire was more spectacular still. By 469, just sixteen years after his death, the last of the Huns were seeking asylum inside the eastern Roman Empire. Their extinction would cause deep reverberations in the Roman west.

Empire to Extinction

RECONSTRUCTING the collapse of Hunnic dominion in central Europe is a tricky proposition. Our old friend Priscus told the story in some detail, but since there was little diplomacy involved in the fall, his account hardly made it into Constantine VII's Excerpts concerning limbassies (see p. 306). For the most part we have to rely on one of the most intriguing historical works to survive from late antiquity: the Gothic History, or Getica, of Jordanes, whose voice we have already heard in earlier chapters. About ten pages of text (half of it notes) in the standard edition provide the only coherent existing account of the

Jordanes was a man of Gothic descent living in Constantinople around the year 550, so he was writing nearly a century after the vents we're interested in. At this point he was a monk, but had

previously served as a secretary to a Roman commander on the so was not without relevant experience. He tells on that his history of the Goths in us in the previously served as a secretary.

Danube, so was not without relevant experience. He tells us in the to the Getica that his history of the Goths is largely to history written by an Italo.p. largely the Danube, so was not without released that his history of the Goths is largely the preface to the Getica that his history written by an Italo-Roman that he was adviser to Theoderic the Anan can preface to the Getica that history written by an Italo-Roman abridgement of a lost history written by an Italo-Roman calculation. Cassiodorus was adviser to Theoderic the Amal Calculation. abridgement of a lost mistory abridg cassiodorus. Cassiodorus was accessiodorus. Cassiodorus. Cassiodorus was accessiodorus. Cassiodorus was accessiodorus was accessiodorus was accessiodorus was accessionorus was accessionor gothic king of Italy, in the sense and the s Cassiodorus' history for just that, as he puts it, 'the words I recall not, but the sense and that, as he puts it, 'the words I recall not, but the sense and det something that, as he puts it, the worker that it is a worker than the w related I think I retain control fishy in this, arguing cruice that he had very little to do with his model than he pretends, or that he had very little to do with his model than ne precent, his model than ne precent, him and was trying to use Cassiodorus' name for his own purpose founder, however, on their proponents' fail him and was trying to the him and the hi These hypotheses rouncing reason for Jordanes to have lied. I to be is broadly telling the truth in claiming. come up with a convenience confident that he is broadly telling the truth in claiming to have followed Cassiodorus' outline closely. The Getica corresponds well enough with the few things we know from elsewhere about Cassio. dorus' history.3

But even if Jordanes' preface is not disguising some massive deception, this doesn't make the Getica a reliable source. Cassiodonis wrote his history of the Goths for the court of the Ostrogothic king Theoderic the Amal, and this has a significant bearing on the narrative of Hunnic collapse that has come down to us in the Getica. Above all and as you might expect, it is a thoroughly Gotho-centric account Only the story of the Goths removing themselves from Hunnic overlordship is told in any detail in its pages, and even the Huns appear only incidentally. More specifically, Cassiodorus had to tell his Gothic history as his particular Gothic king wanted it told. As a result, it contains two historical distortions.

First, it claims that all the Goths who didn't flee from the Huns in AD 376 by crossing over into the Roman Empire immediately fell under Hunnic control. This is nonsense. We actually know of seven groups of Goths, other than the Greuthungi and Tervingi who sought asylum from the emperor Valens in 376 (and there is no reason to suppose that even this list is exhaustive):

1. The Amal-led Goths, who were under Hunnic control by the time of Attila and were presently ruled by Theoderic.

2. The Goths of Radagaisus who invaded Italy in 405/6 and

eventually became part of Alaric's new Visigothic group (see Chapter 5).

Chapter 6.

Chapter 5).

Chapter 6.

Chapter 6.

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Chapter 6.

Chapt The Goths of random in the 420s, and resettled by the from the from Thrace; quite possibly the ancestors of from Hunnic in Service; quite possibly the ancestors of group 6 gromans in Thrace; quite possibly the ancestors of group 6

below.
The Goths of a king called Bigelis, who unsuccessfully invaded
The Goths Roman Empire sometime between 466 and 47. The Goths Operating in the train of Denoisial

the east Roman territory in the late 406 and 471.

The Goths operating in the train of Dengizich, son of Attila,

The han he invaded east Roman territory in the late 400 The Gould or A son of A when he invaded east Roman territory in the late 460s.

when he mive of Goths already settled in Thrace as Roman 6. A large group about 470.

allies in about 470. allies in an analler, Gothic groups established in enclaves
7. Two other, smaller, Gothic groups established in enclaves
7. Two other, smaller, Gothic groups established in enclaves Two outs around the Black Sea: the Tetraxitae of the Cimmerian Bosporus and the Goths of Dory in the south-western

Crimea.4

In concentrating solely upon group 1, therefore, the Getica's historical nision substantially simplifies Gothic history.

Second – and closely related to the first point – the Getica overstates the historical importance of the Amal dynasty from which Theoderic, Cassiodorus' employer, was descended. By dividing the Goths into those who were conquered by the Huns in 376 and those who fled, the Getica can maintain that the Amal family had long ruled every Goth who did not enter Roman territory during the reign of Valens. The Amals were later responsible for the creation of the Ostrogoths, as mentioned earlier, but this happened between about 460 and 490. Nothing suggests that the Amal dynasty had been anything like as prominent before it acquired this new power-base. Parvenu dynasts often pretend that they are not parvenus at all, and Theoderic was a case in point. Cassiodorus' letters consistently refer to Theoderic's amily as a 'purple dynasty'; this perspective permeated Cassiodorus' history - hence its presence in the Getica. Furthermore, there is no leason to suppose that our list of seven groups is exhaustive: there were many Gothic 'royal' families competing at the heads of their adividual warbands.' In reality the fall of the Hunnic Empire was nther more messy than Jordanes makes out.

As the Getica tells it, the origins of Hunnic collapse lay in a dispute over succession between Attila's sons soon after their father's sudden At least three of the sons figure in different sources as important

leaders in their own right – Dengizich, Ellac and Hernac but idea of how many there were in total, or of whether their for their fort leaders in their own right - Dengue, and Hernac and Hernac have no idea of how many there were in total, or of whether some, were potential candidates for their father's possible to civil war, which result possible to the have no idea of how many user words, or of whole or only some, were potential candidates for their father's possible the Gepids under their king Auted in or only some, were potential calculated in the resulted in the The quarrel soon degenerated in the quarrel soon degenerated in the Gepids under their king Ardend in the Hunnic domination. This presumably meant that the Company of the Germanic subject group, the Germanic subject group group, the Germanic subject group group group, the Germanic subject group group group, the Germanic subject group g ing off Hunnic domination. The refused to pay any more tributes or to answer demands for the Cepta on an unidentified river tells. refused to pay any more uncorrection was not taken lying down, the Getter tells on an unidentified river in pane service. The rebellion was a battle on an unidentified river in pannone

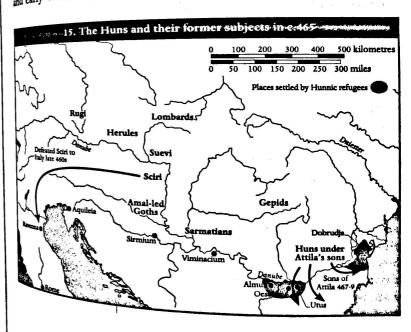
There an encounter took place between the various nations And There an encounter took problem with their peoples were made many members were had held under this sweet, divided, and out of one body were made many members were members not seemed of the common impulse. Being deprived of the common impulse. responding to a common impulse. Being deprived of their head they madly strove against each other ... And so the bravest nations tore themselves to pieces ... One might see the Goths fighting with pikes, the Gepids raging with the sword, the Rugi breaking off the spears in their own wounds, the Sueves [Suevi] fighting on foot, the Huns with bows, the Alans drawing up a battle-line of heavy-armed and the Herules of light-armed warnors. Finally, after many bitter conflicts, victory fell unexpectedly to the Gepids.

This is good breastplate-ripping stuff, but not very informative event the outline story is plausible enough. Clearly, dynastic strife was the norm within the royal family of the Huns, once power became mor centralized in the fifth century. We saw in Chapter 7 that royal refugees from previous succession struggles had ended up inside the Roman Empire in the 440s, for instance, and some were returned for execution. Jordanes is also unlikely to have given the Gepids a starring role unless it was impossible not to, especially since there was no lost lost between Goths and Gepids by the sixth century.7

What's not at all clear, though, is who was on whose side in the battle, and whether there was just one big battle or a series of smaller or a series o ones. Jordanes is also a bit vague on the outcome of all this violent. He baldly reports that 'by his revolt [Arderic] freed not only his off tribe have all all and a post vague on the outcome of all the outcome of al tribe, but all the others who were equally oppressed But how precisely this liberary precisely this liberation happened is open to question. When, in the battle (or hattles) Acril battle (or battles), Attila's son Ellac was killed, Jordanes reports, by

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE obers for lands east of the Huns' subjects no obers for lands east to all the Huns' subjects, no matter whose and models for freedom to all the year 460. the matter whose and models out freedom to all the year 460. ohers for lands east of the Huns' subjects, no matter whose side for lands out freedom to all the Huns' subjects, no matter whose side made fout freedom to all the year 460, the position of the made fought on. By about the year 460, the position of the made had fought on. By about the Middle Danubian Distriction of the made had fought on. pade 101 out freedom to all the Figure Subjects, no matter whose side out freedom to all the year 460, the position of the major but fought on. By about the year 460, the position of the major but fought on. By about the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but had a around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in and around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as the but fought in an area. but had fought on. By about the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as we can the had around the Middle Danubian Plain, in so far as we can power in and around the ferritory and the power it, was more of territory and the ferritory be had around the framework plain, in so far as we can major or less as follows (map 15). The Amal-led powers in was more or less as follows (map 15). The Amal-led reconstruct it, was more of territory south of the River Daniel power it, was more of territory south of the River Danube in reconstruct it, was more of territory from Lake Balaton towards occupied pannonia, stretching from Lake Balaton towards and pannonia, stretching from reconstruction and are stretching from Lake Balaton towards the gord Roman The Gepids controlled the north-eastern former similar. Roman Palinoins, The Gepids controlled the north-eastern stretch, of of Sirmium. The old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned. of Sirmium. The north-eastern stretch, of Sirmium much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the two were the Suevi north of the province of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the old Roman province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the including much of the province of Dacia abandoned in the i ory much of the two were the Suevi north of the Danube including much of the Danube including much of the Danube included century. 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At in odd details of Iordanes' account bingdoms. There are details of Jordanes' account, to make it clear that, bowever, and in odd details of jordanes' account, to make it clear that, nowerth, this is much too simple a picture.

The idea that the Huns suddenly disappeared from the Carpathian The luca limit of the later 450s region in 453/4, for instance, is deeply misleading. In the later 450s regul in 1903 and early 460s, they twice intervened west of the Carpathians against



the Amal-led Goths in Pannonia, as Jordanes himself tells us, the later 460s Attila's remaining sons were still able to launch and a later 460s Attila's remaining sons were still able to launch and a later 460s Attila's remaining sons were still able to launch and a later across the Danube. If, as Jordanes the Amal-led Goths in Pannonia, as Journal of minister tells us, the later 460s Attila's remaining sons were still able to launch and the Roman Empire across the Danube. If, as Jordanes report the battle of the report of the second of the s the Amal-leu the later 460s Attila's remaining some the l into the Roman Empire across the into the Roman Empire across the huns did leave the Middle Danube after the battle of the Nedao may have freed the Gepids to the Nedao the Huns, under Attila's and the Gepids to the Nedao the N Huns did leave the Middle Daniel Huns did leave the Middle Nedao may have freed the Gepida the didn't go far. And while Nedao may have freed the Gepida the Gepida to the Huns, under Attila's son Dethelm didn't free everyone. When the didn't free everyone. When the didn't free everyone attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the last time in 467/8, there we attacked the east Roman Empire for the attacked the east Roman Bulput attacked to the east Roman Bulput attacked the east Roman Bulp still substantial numbers of School still substantial numbers of School still substantial numbers of School Jordanes also tells us that Delig...

Several group.

Amal-led Goths. 11 This doesn't mean that Nedao Was Nedao Ultzinzures, Angisciri, bittuguited on the Amal-led Goths. This doesn't mean that Nedao was not a training-point, but it does demonstrate that Hunnic means that Hunnic means that Hunnic means the summing of the summing point is the summing point of the summing point. on the Amal-led Gouis.

significant turning-point, but it does demonstrate that Hunnic power population groups of the Carpathian region power. significant turning-point, but a significant turning-point significant significant turning-point significant significant

denly extinguished.

The path to freedom of the Amal-led Goths, and most of the Hung.

What Iordanes implies, either No. The path to necessary of the Hung subjects, was not quite what Jordanes implies, either. No sudden sudden time A sudden moment of liberation freed everyone at the same time. As we have seen, there were at least three separate groups of Goths under Hunne dominion at Attila's death, and there had earlier been a fourth (group 3/6, p. 353), detached from Hunnic control by east Roman action and resettled in Thrace in the 420s. Group 1 had escaped by the later 450s. group 4 by the mid-460s, while group 5 never escaped at all, particularly pating in the Huns' final attack on the Empire in 467/8. We have no equivalent information for the Huns' other subject peoples, but behind each individual group name - Suevi, Rugi, Herules, Gepids, Alans and so on - there may likewise have been several independent political units who threw off Hunnic dominion at various points between 453 and 468.

Nor should we assume that each of the separate units that emerged from the wreck of the Hunnic Empire already had its own smoothly functioning leadership at the time of Attila's death. The Getica report that this was true of the Amal-led Goths, claiming that Valamer the Amal, Theoderic's uncle, had been a trusted right-hand man of Amil and that the Amal dynasty's pre-eminence over Group 1 was beyond challenge. There are good reasons for doubting both claims. Jordans himself himself reports that for forty years under Hunnic hegemony, before the appearance of the second seco the appearance of Valamer, this supposedly unchallengeable dynast hadn't account. hadn't actually ruled any Goths at all. He also tells some interesting stories about a ruled any Goths at all. stories about a supposedly Hunnic ruler by the name of Balamber.

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE defeated several Gothic rulers, in particular Vinitharius and defeated Many chronological inconsistencies fizzle out once defeated several corners, in particular Vinitharius and inconsistencies fizzle out once it is happing that the accounts of Balamber's exploits probably decomplified that the accounts of balamber's exploits probably decomplified are first consolidated his hold over the accounts of the accounts of the first consolidated his hold over the accounts of derra. Many chronological miconsistencies fizzle out once it is morning that the accounts of Balamber's exploits probably describe that the accounts had had over the Amal-Goths. Balamber's first consolidated his hold over the Amal-Goths. Balamber's and the sources. that the accounts of his hold over the Amal-Goths. Balamwalamer first consolidated his sources; and in Greek. Valwalamer appear in any other sources. over the Amal-Goths. Balamrow valamer in any other sources; and in Greek, Valamer is
row valamer in appear in appear in the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating two rival Corrections of the stories tell of him defeating the stories of the stories of the stories tell of him defeating the stories of the stories o value, palaming values, and in Greek, Valamer is the stories tell of him defeating two rival Gothic before the stories of Vinitharius and Hunimund, together the persons of Vinitharius and Vinith by doesn's lalamer'. The stories can of min defeating two rival Gothic mitten in the persons of Vinitharius and Hunimund, together with lines in the persons of Sesimund, the brother of Thomas mind lines in Thorismund. Gesimund, the brother of Thomas mind lines is son Thorismund. office in the persons of vinitualities and Hunimund, together with the life in the persons of vinitualities and Hunimund, together with the life in the persons of the life in pling overlordship rather than continuing the contest, with thorismund's son Beremund fled west into the Roman Enterpret Thorismund fled west into the weeped Valamer's son Beremund fled west into the Roman Empire.

Method Thorismund's son Beremund fled west into the Roman Empire.

Method of an Amal dynasty with a unique, long-established. Thorismund s son dynasty with a unique, long-established prestige instead of an Amal dynasty when, we need to envisor of Attila's death, then, we need to Instead of an Attila's death, then, we need to envisage several the time of Attila's warlords, each with their own warlords. the time of Gothic warlords, each with their own warbands. It valamer, it seems, who first united them, in some income in the seems who first united them. ompeting petty Goldan, who first united them, in some instances by valamer, it seems, who first united them, in some instances by military action (as in the killing of Hunimund). in oalvalamer, it seems, in some instances by valamer, action (as in the killing of Hunimund); in others, as with met military action, by conciliation; and in vet others. (similarly action), by conciliation; and in yet others, by a mixture Valamer killed Vinitharius. then manifeld to Grimund's surrenas, -) and Joe outers, by a mixture of the two - Valamer killed Vinitharius, then married his granddaughof the two - values of two - values of the two - values of the two - values of the death of Attila. The process generated a much larger Gothic force, better able to resist Hunnic domination, and it is hard to think that Artila in his pomp would have tolerated it. 13

Quite clearly, then, not all of the Huns' subjects came in neat mits, with established leaderships ready and waiting to recapture their mulen died. The Gepids perhaps did, and this might explain why they were able to regain their independence so quickly. But other groups that we see asserting their autonony after Attila's death had been generated only recently: on the hoof, sit were, around the leadership of new men. The emergence of the lingdom of the Sciri, for instance, was far from straightforward. In the 60s, they were ruled by the same Edeco whom we met in the last dapter as one of Attila's trusted inner circle, the man the east Romans bad tried to bribe into assassinating the then Hunnic leader. Edeco was supported by two sons, Odovacar and Onoulph. As the Hunnic Empire collapsed, Edeco clearly managed to reinvent himself, turning from busted Hunnic henchman into the king of the Sciri. Interestingly, he Robably Wasn't a Sciri by birth. His sons are described as having Schan mother, but he himself is labelled as either a Hun or a Thuringian. The latter – being more specific – is perhaps more likely be correct. What qualified Edeco for leadership of the Sciri was not his origin, then, but a marriage alliance probably with the daughter have no information; but I suspect at Attila 8 count have his origin, uncompared with the product at Attila a Scirian bigwig, combined with the other groups we have no information; but I suspect that he will be with the mid. The big to late the other groups we have no the other groups we have no the suspect that place successor kingdoms to the Hunnic Empire could be late of this kind of political reordering which the mid. The mid. The mid. The before the successor kingdoms to the Hunnic Empire to late the light of history. The light of history. The light of history.

of the light of history. The putting all these fragments together suggests a rather that the collapse of the Hunnic Empire from that the collapse of the Hunnic Empire from that the collapse of the Hunnic Empire from the collapse of the collapse of the Hunnic Empire from the collapse of the col Putting all these tragments

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account of the collapse of the Hunnic Empire from that given by

The part of at the Jordanes. If the reassertion of independence on the part of at less the subject peoples had to be preceded by major bole. Jordanes. If the reassertion of the subject peoples had to be preceded by major political this tells us that the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by major political thin the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the Hunnic Empire eased to be preceded by the part of at least the part o extinction as the Huns gradually lost control of those peoples.

The emergence of the new independent groups then set in motion. The Hamiltonian the process of Hunnic extinction. The Hamiltonian the process of Hunnic extinction. the final stage in the process of Hunnic extinction. The Huns by gathered most of them together on the Great Hungarian plain the unprecedented concentration of armed groups creating there a hugh powerful war machine. 15 In the Roman period, the area had ben divided between just Sarmatians, Suevi and Vandals - Roman poling in the immale took great care to prevent overcrowding in the immediate from area, for fear that it would lead to violence. The removal of Hunnig domination created just the situation that these old Roman policies were designed to prevent: a concentration of competitive annel groups in a relatively small area. So battles for independence naturally evolved into a fight for regional hegemony in the 460s, as the new kingdoms took each other on in a struggle for mastery on the Danube

Again, the only coherent narrative is to be found in the Geing which of course presents it as a triumph for the Amal-led Goths." As Jordanes tells it, these quickly came to blows with the Suevi, ord whom they won a great victory. The Suevi then stirred up the other regional powers against the Goths, particularly the Sciri, who managed to kill Valamer in a first bout of fighting. The Goths, however, tooks ferocious revenge, destroying the Sciri as an independent power. This led most of the rest - the Suevi, the remaining Sciri, Rugi, Gentle Sciri, Rugi, Gentl Sarmatians 'and others' - to unite against the Goths. The result was second great battle, on a second unidentified river in Pannonia, Bolia, where, as Jordanes tells us:

The party of the Goths was found to be so much the stronger that the plant the stronger than the stronger that the stronger than the stronger th that the plain was drenched in the blood of their fallen foes and worked like a crimson sea. Weapons and corpses, piled up like to more than ten miles. When the Coal with joy unsneakable to worked like a crimson for more than ten miles. When the Goths with joy unspeakable, because by this organishis, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable, because by this organishis, they rejoiced they had avenued at the control of the co booken the pissis with joy unspeakable, because by this great the pissis they rejoiced they had avenged the blood of Valamenth of their foes the blood of Valamenth of the blood of Vala hills they rejoices they had avenged the blood of Valamer of their foes they had avenged the blood of Valamer shull king.

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The violence and instability only began to ease off a little in the The violence of the competing groups were eliminated. The Scirian region as some of the competing in the late 460s and in the late 460s. ngion as some in the late 460s, and in 473 the Amalingdom lost its independence in the late 460s, and in 473 the Amalingdom lost its independence to try their luck in the bingdom lost its area to try their luck in the east Roman Empire. led Gotths that soon enough, however, to save the sons of Attila. None of the 450s and 460s unfolded, their position was fatally as the events of the 450s and 460s unfolded, their position was fatally Must red. Each assertion of independence meant that another undermined. abject people had stopped paying their annual tributes. This was bad anugh, but then the new kingdoms started to take the initiative, looking to maximize their positions at the expense both of each other and of the Huns. The transformation from victors to victims is well illustrated in the two wars that the sons of Attila fought, according to jordanes, against the Amal-led Goths. In the first they attacked them a 'fugitive slaves', with the aim of reasserting their own hegemony and tribute rights. In the second, they were seeking to prevent some of the smaller groups settled in Pannonia from falling under Gothic dominion.19 All the other major groups we hear about were doing much the same, so that the Huns' power-base was steadily eroded.

By the mid-460s the two surviving sons, Dengizich and Hernac, were desperate. The loss of subject peoples, combined with the treasing empowerment of groups like the Amal-led Goths, left their Position north of the Danube untenable. The only option open to ben was to seek an accommodation with the Roman Empire. But Dengizich got it wrong – perhaps he demanded too much. In 469 he Vas defeated by the Roman general Anagastes, and his head publicly at Constantinople. Hernac and his followers, perhaps less

greedy, were eventually resettled beside the Danube in home other Hunnic remnants of Oescus, Utus and Alm. greedy, were eventually resettied beside the Danube in Dobrudja (modern Romania), and some other Hunnic remnants around the fortresses of Oescus, Utus and Almus, Independent of the Danube had ended. The demiss. preedy, Dobrudja (modern Romania), and around the fortresses of Oescus, Utus and Almus home in and around the fortresses of Danube had ended. The demise per Dobrudja (modina de la companya de l

Riding the Tiger

DESPITE ITS MANY limitations, then, the Getica's account allows up some of the key stages in the process of Hunnic coll to DESPITE ITS MANY limitations, reconstruct some of the key stages in the process of Hunnic college than the process of the process o over the years, many explanations have been offered for this tended to around the property of the personner Over the years, many expressions of earlier eras tended to argue the extraordinary personal capacities of Area ordinary phenomenon. The extraordinary personal capacities of Attilation at the helm. Edward Thomas the Empire could only exist with him at the helm. Edward Thompson by the Huns' demise in the divisive social effects by Empire could only talk white in the divisive social effects of all the Roman Empire. 20 Than 1 Thompson by the wealth they acquired from the Roman Empire. 20 There is some the wealth they acquired is some thing in both of these theories. Attila the Hun, as we have seen we an extraordinary operator, and no doubt the gold extracted from Rome was not distributed entirely evenly among his people. But a full understanding of the Hunnic Empire must turn on its relations with its largely Germanic subjects. As already suggested, it was the ability to suck in so many of these militarized groups that underlay the sudden explosion of Hunnic power in the 420s-40s. After Andri death, likewise, it was his successors' increasing inability to maintain control over those same groups that spelled their own decline.

The key starting-point is that the Hunnic Empire was not generally enrolled voluntarily. All the evidence we have suggests that non-Hunnic groups became caught up in it through a combination of conquest and intimidation. In the time of Attila, the Akatziri were the latest to fall into the Empire's orbit. We took in the first half of the story in Chapter 7, when the east Roman ambassador gave the best gifts to the wrong king. Priscus tells us what happened next:

Kouridachus, the senior [king of the Akatziri] in office ... called in Attila against his fellow kings. Attila without delay sent a large force, destroyed some, and forced the rest to submit. He then the submit the summoned Kouridachus to share in the prizes of victory. But he suspension suspecting a plot, declared that it was hard for a man to come the sight of a god ... In this way Kouridachus remained the sight of folk and saved his realm, while all the rest of the his own folk and to Attila 21 the sight of a good and saved his realm, while all the rest of the his own folk and saved his realm, while all the rest of smongst his own people submitted to Attila.21 smongst nis people submitted to Attila.21
she Akatzirian people submitted to Attila.21

the sent his eldest son to rule over the conquered. The passage while Attila was capable of deft political management that was demanded the basis then sent his elucate was capable of deft political manoeuvring while Attila was capable of deft political manoeuvring demanded, the basic tool of Hunnic important the occasion demanded. It was the occasion that the occasion the occasion that the occasion the occasion that the occasion that the occasion the occasion that the oc passage while while demanded, the basic tool of Hunnic imperial of the occasion demanded. It was, of course, to avoid it managion was military conquest. It was, of course, to avoid it. tool of Hunnic imperial was military conquest. It was, of course, to avoid Hunnic imperial was military conquest. It was, of course, to avoid Hunnic imparison that the Tervingi and Greuthungi had come to the Department of the first of the open was multary consistency and Greuthungi had come to the Danube open to that the Tervingi and Greuthungi had come to the Danube of 376 in the first place. And it was after a summer of 376 in the first place. opinination that use of 376 in the first place. And it was after a savage in the summer of 376 the Huns in the 430s that the Russian at the hands of the Huns in the 430s that the Russian at the Huns in the 430s that the Russian at the Huns in the 430s that the Russian at the the summer of the Huns in the 430s that the Burgundians at the hands of the Roman Empire. All this is consistent and up in the Roman Empire. muling at the manual Roman Empire. All this is consistent with the mouling at the Roman Empire, and the second with the mouling at the manual Roman Empire. All this is consistent with the mouling at the manual Roman Empire. All this is consistent with the mouling at the manual Roman Empire. one way, and one way only, for that there was, as we have seen, one way, and one way only, for that there was as we have seen, one way, and one way only,

for unit Artila's Empire: warfare.22 We don't have all the information we might like on relations We don't have conquerors and their various subjects. Pride of between the Hunnic conquerors as story told by Decisions between the riminate given to a story told by Priscus, often seen as place has removed, onten seen as illustrating the ethnic and social mobility that was possible in the illustrating the while hanging around Arriba's account while hanging around Arriba's account to the interest of the inte Humic Empire. While hanging around Attila's camp, Priscus ran into Hunnit distribution of the case of Portion in Greek. Upon inquiry, the Hun' numed out to be an ex-Roman prisoner, a former merchant Hun captured at the fall of Viminacium in 441. In the share-out that followed he had been assigned to Onegesius and had fought in subsequent campaigns, against both the Romans and the Akatziri. He did well, won lots of booty, which he passed on to Onegesius, and was consequently freed. He'd then taken a Hunnic wife and was now a musted companion of his former master, accustomed to dining with him. Thus a slave who did well in battle could win his freedom and be accepted in fairly exalted Hunnic circles. Not so commonly quoted another story exposing the other side of master-slave relations under the Huns. Also during his stay at Attila's court, Priscus saw the gibbeting of two slaves who had taken the opportunity offered by the turmoil of battle to kill their master. And in fact, most of the Huns' subjects were exploited in a variety of ways and kept firmly in

A revealing fragment of Priscus' history records an incident in 467/8 Dengizich's last attack on the east Roman Empire, when a bined force of Goths and Huns was picked apart by Romans; they teninded the Gothic contingent of exactly how the Huns generally behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards them: 'These men have no concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved towards the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the position of slaves behaved to the concern for agriculto in the concern for agric behaved towards them: 'These Incl. Lave no concern for but, like wolves, attack and steal the Goths' food supplies agriculty that the latter remain in the position of slaves and themselves.'

24 Taking the subject peoples' and themselves. but, like wolves, attack and stear the position of slaves and then the position of slaves and then the subject peoples, supplies, which the story. They were also used, as supplies was suffer food shortages.'24 Taking the Subject Peoples' Supplies White Course, only part of the story. They were also used, as we have we have to have the course, only part of the story.

to fight the Huns' wars. Few civilian prisoners are likely to have be and at fighting, and casualty numbers during Hunnic cannot be to fight the Huns' wars. Few cryman products are likely to have been yearly good at fighting, and casualty numbers during Hunnic Campaign than the company of the company o very good at fighting, and casually merchant-turned runnic can be were probably enormous. Priscus' merchant-turned Hun centiled that his was no doubt an unusual story.

spered, but his was no uous.

Clearly, then, the Hunnic Empire was an inherently unstable him with tensions between rulers and ruled. Tension Clearly, then, the running control of the subject peoples themselvas of a clear of the subject peoples themselvas of the subject peoples the subject p different kind also existed between the subject peoples themselves, who mutual aggression even before the Huns are had a long history of mutual aggression even before the Huns appeared to receive little coverage from him had a long history of Hutual age.

This particular instability tends to receive little coverage from historian a Roman. Price. This particular instability because most of our source material comes from a Roman, Priscus, and Arrila's power was unchallengeable Co, and dates to the time when Attila's power was unchallengeable. Cast the net wider, though, and the evidence rapidly gathers itself. The greater strength of the Hunnic Empire – the ability to increase its power by quickly consuming subject peoples – was also its greatest weakness. The Romans, for instance, were happy to exploit, whenever they could the fact that these subject peoples were not there of their own free will in the 420s, the east Roman counteraction against the rising Hunnic power in Pannonia was to remove from their control a large number of Goth whom they then settled in Thrace.25 And an early fragment of Priscus tells us:26 'When Rua was king of the Huns, the Amilzuri, Itiman, Toursoures, Boisci and other tribes who were living near to the Danube were fleeing to fight on the side of the Romans.' This dates to the late 430s, after Rua had achieved considerable success, indicating that even success wasn't enough to guarantee the quiescence of subject groups The start of a new reign was a moment of particular stress. The first campaign of Rua's successors, Attila and Bleda, when they came to power in 440, was not against the Romans: 'When [at the start of their reign] they had made peace with the Romans, Attila, Bleda and their forces marched through Scythia subduing the tribes there and also make war on the Sorogsi.' Reasserting your overlordship over subject groups once you had established your supremacy, was probably the first priority for any new ruler of the Hunnic Empire.

The conflicts that arose after Attila's death were not exceptional then, but inherent in the relationship between the Huns and their

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE when they could, Hunnic leaders tried to ensure that the when they trouble for them in this quarter. In the when they could rouble for them in this quarter. In their first wouldn't stir up trouble her the latter wanted peace of their ambients with the east Romans, when the latter wanted peace of their ambients with the east able to pursue their ambients. the east Rollians, which the east Rollians, which the in the pursue their ambitions in North Africa, able to ensure that the Romans should make the beda were able to ensure that the Romans should make and Bleda were able to ensure that the Romans should make and Bleda were able to ensure that the Romans should make the harbarian people against the Line. on the so as to be able to ensure that the Romans should make no public with a barbarian people against the Huns when the larrange with a barbarian them. Unlike the solutions with a barbarian them. puble Bleda were appeared to that the Romans should make no htila and with a barbarian people against the Huns when the latter were appeared them. Unlike the Roman Empire the forwards for war against them. with a barbarian people against the Huns when the latter were against them. Unlike the Roman Empire, which dissipating the tensions of conquest turning the landowners the landowners. propring for war against the tensions of conquest turning their dissipating the landowners among them – into full Designation of, at least, the landowners among them – into full Designation of the landowners are successful. popularies aussipating their centuries all sat, the landowners among them – into full Romans, spent con, at least, the necessary stability and the bureaucrarie spirits or, at least, the necessary stability and the bureaucratic capacity lacked the necessary Instead of revolutionizing the necessary directly. 27 Instead of revolutionizing the necessary stability and the bureaucratic capacity the huns subjects directly. 27 Instead of revolutionizing the necessary stability and the bureaucratic capacity in their subjects directly. 28 Instead of revolutionizing the necessary stability and the bureaucratic capacity in their subjects directly. 28 Instead of revolutionizing the necessary stability and the bureaucratic capacity in their subjects directly. huns lacked the directly. Instead of revolutionizing the sociopoliprun their subjects are conquered peoples or imposing their own, they and structures of the conquered peoples to continue the daily on an indigenous leadership to continue the daily on the sociopolism of the conquered peoples or imposing their own, they and structures of the subject groups. As a result, the Huns could one of the subject groups. but of the subject groups. As a result, the Huns could exert only a ment of the subject groups and interference. and event of degree of dominion and interference. polit of the subject so dominion and interference, and even that varied moderate degree of dominion another. The Genide moderate degree to another. The Gepids, as we have seen, had from one subject people to another of Arrila's dead for one student per leader at the time of Attila's death, and so were their own overall leader their independence. ther own overall and so were spickly able to assert their independence. Other groups, like the mickly able to produce a leader of the state for had to produce a leader of the state of the mailed Goths, first had to produce a leader of their own before they Amaricu Amaricu hegemony. Some, like the Goths in thrall to Dengizich when he invaded east Roman territory in the 460s, never managed to do so. But even these, still dominated by Dengizich in 468, had their own subchieftains.

If the sources were more numerous and more informative. I suspect that the narrative would show the Hunnic Empire peeling apart like an onion after 453, with different subject layers asserting independence at different times, in inverse relation to the degree of domination the Huns had previously exercised over their lives. The two key variables were, first, the extent to which the subjects' political tructure had been left intact; and second - I strongly suspect but cannot prove - their distance from the heartland of the Empire where Anila had his camps. Some groups, settled close to the Huns' own tentories, were kept on a very tight rein, with any propensity to unified leadership suppressed. Groups living further away preserved more of their own political structures and were less readily controlled. hathe time of Attila, the Franks and the Akatziri defined the geographithe Thuringian marginal influence, while groups in between such as the Thuringians, Goths, Gepids, Suevi, Sciri, Herules, Sarmatians and Mans faced differing degrees of closer control.28

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Archaeological evidence from Attila's Empire offers us on relations between its subjects and rulers. As we have Archaeological evidence non appeared offers us a perspective on relations between its subjects and rulers. As we have the form of Germanic or seriking feature of the excavated as seeming. perspective on relations between the form of Germanic or seemble number of unfurnished burials. As we take the form of Germanic or seemble number of unfurnished burials. Chapter 7, this mainly taken Chapter 7, this mainly taken Germanic or seeming Germanic cemeteries; a striking feature of the excavated material and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished burials and a trible are not in the large number of unfurnished number of u Germanic cemeteries; a surang Germanic cemeteries; a surang Contrast between the large number of unfurnished burials and a street of rich ones. These rich burials are not just quite nich. contrast between the large manufacture of rich ones. These rich burials are not just quite rich the number of rich ones. They contain a huge array of gold fitting the collections being a gold fitting the number of rich ones. These contain a huge array of gold fittings are staggeringly so. They contain a huge array of gold fittings by are staggeringly so. They contained the collections being the cloisonne are mounted in their least the collections are mounted in their least their le ornamentation, the state of the stones are mounted in their and garnet jewellery in which the stones are mounted in their on their of the stones are mounted in the stones are mounted in the stones are mounted in the stone are mounted in and garnet jewellery in which are some the mosaic. This kind of work gold cases to give an effect not unlike mosaic. This kind of work some the mark of elites everywhere in the law work. gold cases to give an energy of elites everywhere in the late and would later become the mark of elites everywhere in the late and would later become the style of the cloisonné jewellen Hoo ship burial of the early seventh post-Roman periods. For ship burial of the early seventh century in found in the Sutton Hoo ship burial of the early seventh century in found in the Sutton Analysis Fast Anglia originally gained its hold on elite imaginations in Humpi East Angua original, o Europe.29 One burial at Apahida (modern Transylvania) produced over sixty gold items, including a solid gold eagle that fitted on to in owner's saddle. Every other piece of this individual's horse equipment was likewise made of gold, and he himself was decked from head to foot in golden jewellery. There are other similarly wealthy burials, a well as others containing smaller numbers of gold items.³⁰

The presence of so much gold in Germanic central and eastern Europe is highly significant. Up to the birth of Christ, social different ation in the Germanic world manifested itself funerarily, if at all, only by the presence in certain graves of larger than usual numbers of handmade pots, or of slightly more decorative bronze and iron safetypins. By the third and fourth centuries AD, some families were burying their dead with silver safety-pins, lots of beads, and perhaps some wheel-turned pottery; but gold was not being used to distinguish evan elite burials at this point - the best they could manage was a link silver.31 The Hunnic Empire changed this, and virtually overnight. The gold-rich burials of the 'Danubian style' mark a sudden explosion of gold grave goods into this part of Europe. There is no doubt when the gold came from: what we're looking at in the grave goods of fitte century Harmonia was supported by the century was support century Hungary is the physical evidence of the transfer of weath northwards from the Roman world that we read about in priscus and the other written the other written sources. The Huns, as we saw in the last chapter, were after gold and a whether were after gold and other moveable wealth from the Empire-whether in the form of in the form of mercenary payments, booty or, especially, and tributes. Clearly larger tributes. Clearly, large amounts of gold were recycled into the jetting

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE and appliqués found in their graves. The fact that many of these indicates that the Huns did not the rich burials of Germans indicates that the Huns did not the rich and oold themselves, but distributed and appliques found in their graves. The fact that many of these indicates that the Huns did not just the rich burials of Germanic subjects as well. These indicates that the gold themselves, but distributed quantities of it is the gold themselves as well. These indicates that the Huns did not just the rich burials of it is commanic subjects as well. or these properties of their subjects as well. These leaders, consequently of their cons The the gold triciniseryes, but distributed quantities of it to the gold triciniseryes, but distributed quantities of it to the mass of their Germanic subjects as well. These leaders, consequently, when of their Germanic subjects as well. These leaders, consequently, when of their distributed this strategy was all the strategy with th

this strategy was that, if Germanic leaders the reasoning behind the successes of the Hunnic Franchischer at the reasoning stake in the successes of the Hunnic Franchischer at the respective of the Hun braffic reasoning Dennic the successes of the Hunnic Empire, then ould be given a stake in the successes would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be minimized and things would run relatively amount would be given a stake in the successes of the Hunnic Empire, then the successes would run relatively amount would be given a stake in the successes of the Hunnic Empire, then the successes would run relatively amount would be given as the successes where the successes were the and be given a state and things would run relatively smoothly.

But would be minimized and things would run relatively smoothly.

But would be given a state and things would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the matter of gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to the subject princes would help lubricate the gold to would be minuted by the subject princes would help lubricate the politics of gold to the subject princes of revolt. Since there are guide and fend off thoughts of revolt. of gold to use subject the politics of revolt. Since there are quite a few and fend off thoughts of revolts must have present the politics of subject and fend off thoughts of revolts. Since there are quite a few containing gold items, these princes must have present print and tenu on these princes must have passed on some brials containing gold items, these princes must have passed on some brials containing gold to favoured supporters.³² The gold thus reflected to burials containing gold supporters. 32 The gold thus reflects the politics of the gold to favoured supporters that the prince buried of the gold to ravour. (It's nice to think that the prince buried at Apahida of Attila's court. (It's nice to think that the prince buried at Apahida of Attila's court. of Attila's court. (A that Priscus encountered.) Equally important, the may have been one that Priscus encountering the arthur gold distributions in countering the pay have peculiar distributions in countering the endemic internal ple of such gold distributions with what we know of the combined with what we know of the ole of such gold with what we know of the source of that gold, instability, controlled of predatory warfare in keeping afloat the leaky inderlines the role of predatory warfare in keeping afloat the leaky bark that was the Hunnic ship of state.

First and foremost, success in warfare built up the reputation of the current leader as a figure of overwhelming power. Witness the case of Attila and the sword of Mars. But there is every reason to suppose that military success had been just as important for his predecessors. A reputation for power brought with it the capacity to mimidate subject peoples, and it was also military success, of course, that provided the gold and other booty that kept their leaders in line although the speed with which subject groups opted out of the Empire the Attila's death suggests that the payments did not compensate for the burden of exploitation. In contrast to the Roman Empire, which, we have seen, attempted to keep population levels low in frontier treas so as to minimize the potential for trouble, the Hunnic Empire acked in subject peoples in huge numbers.33 The concentration of Nich a great body of manpower generated a magnificent war machine, which had to be used – it contained far too many inner tensions to be allowed to lie idle. The number of Hunnic subject groups outnumbered the Lt. bened the Huns proper, probably in a ratio of several to one. It was the subject peoples occupied, or restless elements would be looking for outlets for their energy and the Empire's rickety thucture might begin to crumble.

WE HAVE ARRIVED at a very different perspective on Attila the is often the case, the factor that made him so powerful the house that brief that brief that brief that brief that brief that the brief that brief that brief that the br WE HAVE ARRIVED at a very unitarial parapetrive on Attila the sis often the case, the factor that made him so powerful the poman Empire in the 440g in the brusher. As is often the case, the factor time and so powerful the same time his greatest liability. The military force that brief was subject to the east Roman Empire in the 440s was that brief was that the was that the subject to the subj same time his greatest manney.

the armies of the east Roman Empire in the 4408 was itself

The victories with which it provided him cements. the armies of the east Roman the armies of the armies with which it provided him the armies with internal tension the armies of the armies unstable. The victories with william to provide nim cemental has control in the short term, but it was riven with internal tension has dominance. Should have enabled to would dearn internal tension have control in the short term, but it was a reconstruction in the short term in victories were essential, we make the subjects would desert into the welcome are the Romans. Attila was the greatest barbarian common barbaria tion start to crack, then me greatest barbarian conquered a tiger of unparalleled (... arms of the Romans. Attua was riding a tiger of unparalleled fences.

European history, but he was riding a tiger of unparalleled fences.

To my mind, this in turn explains his otherwise mysterious to my ehe end of the 440s. Between 441 and 447, Attila's To my mind, trus in the state of the 440s. Between 441 and 447, Attila's a man areas protections. the west at the end of the had ransacked the Balkans except for some small areas protected by the peloponnese because of its genometric period by the peloponnese because of the peloponnese because o two major obstacles: the Peloponnese because of its geographic because of its geographic isolation, and the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Empire was on its knees: the annual and land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of its stunning land the city of Constantinople because of the city of Constantinople because o defences. The eastern Empire was on its knees: the annual tribute it was the largest ever expended by a continuous tribute it. was having to pay out was the largest ever expended by a factor of ten. The Huns had squeezed out of Constantinople just about every thing they were likely to get; at the very least, further campaigning against it was bound to run into the law of diminishing returns, Bu there on the Hungarian Plain Attila sat, still surrounded by a hap military machine that could not be left idle. With nothing to attack in the Balkans, another target had to be found. Attila turned to the wes, in other words, because he'd exhausted the decent targets available in the east.

This suggests a final judgement on the Hunnic Empire. Politically dependent upon military victory and the flow of gold, it was bound to make war to the point of its own defeat, then be pushed by that defeat into internal crisis. The setbacks in Gaul and Italy in 451 and 452 must anyway have begun to puncture Attila's aura of invincibility. They certainly caused some diminution in the flow of gold, and some of the outlying subject peoples may already have been getting restive. Quite likely, Attila's death and the civil war between his sons provided just the opportunity they were looking for. Overall, there can be no more vivid testament to the unresolved tensions between dominant Hunder rulers and exploited non-Hunnic subjects than the astonishing demise of Atrile's Parishing demise was of Attila's Empire. The strange death of Hunnic Europe, however, was also interest and interest also integral to the collapse of the western Empire.

A New Balance of Power

of one Huge power centred on the Great Hungarian Plain, of one freaching out towards the Rhine in one direction, the property of the Roman Empire both on the Great Hungarian Plain, of successor states and west now control of successor states are control of successor states and successor states are control of successor states are cont Roman Empire both east and west now found in snother, the successor states. Much of the time c in single a pack of successor states. in mother, the of successor states. Much of the time fighting themselves, they also pressed periodically upon the new themselves, they also pressed periodically upon the new termselves. solution of the time fighting a pace, they also pressed periodically upon the Roman themselves, they became ever more deeply involved in a solution of the time fighting a pace. themselves, and personically upon the Roman which has the Empire became ever more deeply involved in the fall-form the Hunnic collapse, the nature of Roman form form the Hunnic collapse, the nature of Roman foreign policy and from the frontier began to change. In confronting it from the frontier began to change. In confronting their new the Danube Roman authorities had two priorities. The on the panube north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling the squabbling north of the Danube from entiling the squabbling north of the Danube from entiling the squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling their new squabbling north of the Danube from entiling the squabbling north mution, the rounding north of the Danube from spilling over into prevent the square in the form of invasions or incursions, while their own territory in the from the chaos should be the start that what emerged from the chaos should beir own territors, while steguarding that what emerged from the chaos should not be another steguarding that what emerged from the chaos should not be another

The loss of the full text of Priscus' history prevents us from telling monolithic empire. Incluses story from the Roman perspective, but the essence is a community to distil. The surviving sources refer to overflows of various kinds on to Roman territory, the result of the ferocious struggle for Lebensraum on the other side of the Danube. Into the western Empire large numbers of refugees now flooded, individuals and groups who had decided that life south of the river looked preferable to the continuing struggle north of it. The most famous of these refugees was Odovacar, son of Edeco and prince of the Sciri. After the Amalled Goths destroyed the Scirian kingdom, he moved into Roman territory with a band of followers, heading first for Gaul and then for ltaly, where he signed up with the Roman army. His lead was followed by many others of less distinguished origins. By the early 470s, the Roman army of Italy was dominated by central European refugees: Sciri are specifically mentioned, along with Herules, Alans and Torciling, who had all been recruited into its ranks. 4 The surviving sources give us no numbers and no precise dates for the population moves that had brought them to Italy. This perhaps suggests that we should think in terms of a steady flow of immigration and recruitment, rather than a single large-scale influx, although factors such as the destruction of Science of Scirian independence presumably accelerated the process.

If some groups, displaced in dribs and drabs, were merely fleeing the carnage north of the Danube, others were seeking to create their

own enclaves on Roman soil – perceiving this, it would seem where of groups were finding the companies of the companies of the companies the c own enclaves on Roman soil – perceiving units, it would easier option than continuing to compete on the Hungarian Plans are separate incursions on to east Roman line by easier option than continuing to compete on the Hungareen, the mid-460s, a number of groups were finding the garian blain handle, and three separate incursions on to east Rometilion afterward the service of the competition the mid-460s, a number or groups the mid-460s, a number or groups the mid-460s, and three separate incursions on to east Rompetition be accession. In 466 or just afterwards, the mid
are proup mentioned on many the midthe mu-note hot to handle, and three separate models on just afterwards, the models (of the fourth group mentioned on page 353) Level and the man definition of the models of the man definition of the models of the man definition of the models of the mode took place in quick succession. In took place in quick succession. In took place in quick succession. In the land of Hune 1-3 ordance in the land of Hune 1-3 king Bigelis (of the fourth group where he was defeated, 353) led to the more or less the same time a band of Huns led by a continuous state of the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as far as the circumstance of the same time as the circumstance of the circumst followers south of the Danube, which have deleated, Jordane to us. At more or less the same time a band of Huns led by a center of Serdica mental Anal Acres of S Hormidac raided Dacia, peneuraling as an active of Serdica they were defeated by the east Roman general Anthemius is they too that Attila's son Dengizich made his play for a piece too they be too fail to the too fail to th they were defeated by the cast like they were defeated by the cast like this point too that Attila's son Dengizich made his play for a pice of the prosper o this point too that Attua's some seen, he too failed to prosper the seast Roman territory; as we have seen, he too failed to prosper to prosper the seast armed bands more or less coincides with the east Roman territory; as we have or less coincides with the want on the Amal-led Goths and their rivals on the Middle Daniel. between the Amal-led Goths and their rivals on the Middle Danuban the smaller flow of refugees into the western D. Plain, and, like the smaller flow of refugees into the Western Empire

At the same time the new kingdoms were also, to an enter the Huns had left off. Thanks At the same unite the Huns had left off. Thanks to one of the two surviving fragments from Priscus' history that deal with the aftermath of the fall of Attila's Empire, we know that Valamer and he Goths invaded the east Roman Empire to extract an annual subside from it. By the early 460s, Priscus records, this amounted to 30 pounds of gold³⁸ – a much smaller amount than was extracted by Attila at the height of his power (2,100 pounds) and less than half that paid to the Hun at the start of his reign. But it was not an insignificant sum, and if Valamer were to succeed in expanding his power-base further, there was always the chance that he would up his demands just as the Huns had done. Since the authorities in Constantinople were probably having to pay annual subsidies to some of the other successor kingdoms as well, they had to tread very carefully. The new kingdoms had the potential to amalgamate into something just a nasty as Attila's Empire. Some insight into Roman attitudes toward this potential problem is provided by the other relevant fragment w survive from Priscus' history.39 During the interval between the interva and second bouts of fighting between the Goths and the Scin, both sides sent embassies to Constantinople asking for assistance. No of the base o wanted to aid the Goths, but opinion was divided as to the best court of the to take. One counsel was that the Romans should keep out of the conflict angle of the co conflict entirely. Eventually, it was decided to give limited support

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Signature ignores this dimension of the post-Attilan conflicts, fordanes ignores not only manoeuvring with and account that all sides were not only manoeuvring with and account that trying to secure Roman suppose. schi jordanes ignores were not only manoeuvring with and against that all sides were Roman support as well. The face of the state of th school that all sides were not only manoeuvring with and against that all sides were not only manoeuvring with and against that but trying to secure Roman support as well. The fact that we another, but trying to wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back them attests to the incomment of the constantinople wanted to back the but trying to wanted to back them attests to the increasing of of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of the Amal-led Goths, who were the closest thing to the argument of one in Constantinophic Goths, who were the closest thing to a new

The Romans greated the death of Attila as the dawn of a new era. The Romans great Hun's death, the eastern emperor Marcian is on the night of the great had a happy dream in which he saw Attila's had a happy dream in which he saw a happy dream in which he saw a happy dream in which he saw a happy dream in on the night of the same of a rival superior o to have nau a mer, disappearance of a rival superpower proved in two be the end of all troubles, but a development *have need to be needed However, and troubles, but a development that spawned a post to be the end of all troubles. The prospect of a first spawned a problems. not to be the clim problems. The prospect of a further clash of whole series of new problems to be replaced by whole series of a nurther clash of any vanished only to be replaced by many complicated empires had vanished with serious implications for had a nurther clash of regional conflicts with serious implications for both halves of the regonal world. And I strongly suspect that those we hear about in our Roman worker of sources represent no more than the tip of the moutey Furthermore, the many and varied problems of refugees and icherg. Furthermore, the many and varied problems of refugees and icentiles were as nothing compared with the broader consequences of the crash of Attila's Empire. Above all, it destroyed the balance of forces on which, by the mid-fifth century, the western Roman Empire had come to depend.

The Fall of Aetius

As we saw in Chapter 6, the emperor Valentinian III, son of Flavius Constantius and Galla Placidia, came to the throne in 425 at the age of sir. He had been put there by the armies of the eastern Empire, and had never really held the reins of power. An eight-year domination by his mother, who eventually failed in her balancing act between the commanders of the several western army groups, had given way to that of Aetius. This man's extraordinary military acumen during the 4308 would both keep the western Empire afloat and cement his own hold on power. At fourteen a Roman youth was notionally an adult and could make legally binding decisions about property, but at this age in 433 Valentinian was nowhere near ready to compete for power with a tough and experienced general, especially when the Empire aced so many military problems. And by the time he might have been able to exercise authority, five or six years later, Aetius' position was

THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

fully consolidated. By 440 it was the general, not the making the key decisions about policies and the chart Placidia had laboured to appointment. fully consolidated. By 440 it was the general, not the was making the key decisions about policies and the enterior etate of affairs that Placidia had laboured to avoid over over over over the power over over the power over the pow y state of affairs that Placidia nau industried to avoid when the notional emperor of the Roman west found have the notional existence is Thus, trapped within patterns of power over the Roman west found have figurehead. The drudgery of such an existence is easy to have to the large out of Italy, Valentinian and to the large out of Italy out of control, the notional emperor of the Rollian West found and mere figurehead. The drudgery of such an existence is easy to the such and Ravenna, his rolling to the rolling mere figurehead. The druggery of state and existence is easy line to the state of t estimate. Never venturing out a stary, valentinian sey to be shuttling between Rome and Ravenna, his routine shuttling a private life replete with the trappings of almost in a spent his routine alternation. shuttling between Rome and state occasions. An emperor's job, as we have such between a private life repiete with the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was expensed indeed God-ordained was expensed. wealth, and state occasions. All emperors Job, as we have wealth to embody the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to embody the superhuman, indeed God-ordained, hattile of the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the superhuman, indeed God-ordained, hattile of the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state in the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state in the core ideologies of the Roman state. He was exposed to the core ideologies of the Roman state in the core ide to embody the core ideologics to encapsulate the superhuman, indeed God-ordained, has encounted order, displaying in his ceremonial self the divine of the to encapsulate the supernuman, and the supernuman supernuman, and the supernuman supernuman supernuman, and the supernuman sup Roman world order, cuspiaying port that had called the Roman Empire into being. As the divine to processions, Christian masses and audion in the many ceremonies, processions, Christian masses and auditord to officiate at in the many ceremones, production in the many ceremones, production he could never let his halo slip. And what he had to officiate at the many ceremones and and another than the many ceremones, production in th in and day out, was supremely tedious in its repetitiveness to omciate at the enitome of the one-party state in action and the one-party state in action action and the one-party state in action and the one-party state in action a Empire being the epitome of the one-party state in action, public to the control of the one-party state in action, public to the control of the one-party state in action, public to the one-party state in action state in act agreement was not tolerated. Unity was all. Ceremonies were related to the point home. It was under the lessly orchestrated to bring this point home. It was under Valenting it will be remembered, that the Theodosian Code was introduced to be Senate (see p. 124). Valentinian was spared this particular perform ance, but it was typical of what he had daily to endure. The acts mations that probably prefaced every major imperial ceremon involved 245 shouts of approval from the assembled senators. A but experiment I have just run with my eleven-year-old son reveals that you can shout about eighteen such acclamations in a minute, so that the ceremony for the Code would have taken at least forty minutes and that's not allowing for fatigue setting in and slowing things down towards the end.

Valentinian's predecessors had experienced the same daily gind but they at least had the satisfaction of making policy decisions and appointments behind closed doors once the spectaculars were over We have already witnessed the frustration that such a lifestyle engineering dered in Valentinian's sister Honoria: an affair with her estate manage. an unwanted pregnancy and a dangerous liaison with Attila the History (see Changer The Country The Cou (see Chapter 7). Nor was it easy for Valentinian to change thing is difficult for the second is difficult for royal minors who reach adulthood only to they still remain they still remain marginal to the exercise of power. They may have

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE outon to the winds, like the seventeen-year-old Edward III, who to the winds on 19 October 1330 broke into Nottingham casel-outon on 19 Queen Isabella, arrest her lover Mortimer, and midnight mother Queen But most royal minors are not so defined the reins of power. But was the vound amount of power are not so defined the reins of power. mother Queen most royal minors are not so daring, which the reins of power. But most royal minors are not so daring, the reins of power was the young emperor's only bulward on the 440s Aetius was the young emperor's only bulward on the yo remove reins of Powers was the young emperor's only bulwark against only the 440s Aetius was the Yolansia.

The Huns.

Huns, was nothing that Valentinian could do about his frustra-if there was and 440s, the collapse of the Hunnic U the state of the state of the Hunnic Empire brought thous of change blowing through western court circles Research tons in the 430s and through western court circles. By 450 or so, wind of change blowing through western Aetius and his wind of change of contention had arisen between Aetius and his emperor.

who bones of contention had arisen between Theodosius II L. 1 bones of content the eastern emperor Theodosius II had died after on 28 july that year the eastern was of the Theodosius II had died after his horse. Valentinian was of the Theodosius II had died after on 28 july that horse. Valentinian was of the Theodosian dynasty, ful from his horse of Theodosius' daughters. Fudovia fall from the of Theodosius' daughters, Eudoxia, and it was Theomarried to one of Theodosius' daughters, Eudoxia, and it was Theomarried to one had but him on the western the same than the same that married to was Theo-married to who had put him on the western throne in a determined dosius' forces who had put him on the western throne in a determined dosius restatement of the unity of that dynasty (see Chapter 6). Theodosius restatement of the unity of that dynasty (see Chapter 6). restatement up. I neodosius had been its last male representative in the east, his only son Arcadius had been sold of cousin's death, Valentinian having predeceased him. Hearing of his cousin's death, Valentinian having Plant had the idea, so we are told, of going to Constantinople to assert his had the idea, so daim to rule the entire Roman world as sole emperor. Aetius set himself against the plan. It was certainly ill conceived. Valentinian had no contacts in Constantinople, and eastern political circles were not about to welcome him. Matters there were ordered by Theodosius' sister Pulcheria, who had been a strong voice throughout her brother's reign. Eventually she married a staff officer by the name of Marcian. On 25 August it was Marcian who became the new emperor of the east. Valentinian had missed his chance, such as it was, and Aetius' opposition to his plan continued to rankle.

The second disagreement between the two concerned marriage alliances. Valentinian's union with Eudoxia, produced only two daughters: Eudocia (born in 438 or 439) and Placidia (born between 439 and 443). By the early 450s, after fifteen years of marriage, it was unlikely that the imperial couple would have any more children. This meant that the succession to the western Empire was up for grabs, and the likeliest route to securing it would be marriage to one or other of Valentinian's daughters. As we saw in Chapter 6, Eudocia had been betrothed to Huneric, son of Geiseric king of the Vandals, as part of the of the peace deal of the 440s, and he was not a serious contender for the three the throne. It was thus Placidia who became the key to the future of the P of the Roman west, and Aetius worked hard in the early 450s to

persuade Valentinian to betroth her to his son Gaudentius would have cemented Actius in power, making it entre persuade Valentinian to betrout the son Gaudentius marriage would have cemented Aetius in power, making it extends the dynasty. Given the the dynasty would succeed the dynast marriage would have cemented Action in Power, making its likely that Gaudentius would succeed Valentinian. Given the dynasty would the lately as the same and have to would have to woul likely that Gaudentius would success a male Theodosian heir, marriage into the dynasty would have be confer legitimacy, especially as the same procedule. Whether in procedule by a male Theodosian heir, marriage and a male Theodosian heir, marriage sufficient to confer legitimacy, especially as the same brould have by the same procedure by the same proc sufficient to confer legitimacy, especially as the same procedure by just been followed in Constantinople. Whether, in pushing to a perception that the the the same procedure by weakened his hold over the the the same procedure by the same pr just been followed in Constantinopie.

marriage, Aetius was responding to a perception that the form that the form that the form that the form that the constant increased the constantion increased the constantion. marriage, Aetius was responding succession issue had already weakened his hold over Valenting increased the emperor's all the compensations. succession issue had already well-succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession is already well-succession in the succession in the succession is already well-success unclear. But the proposal certainly unclear. But the proposal certainly unclear was being marginally the own Empire.41

hin his own Empire.

Moreover, with the death of Attila and the collapse of his Emphresis and the collapse o Moreover, with the death of Actius now seemed much less critical to Valentinian's survival, and imperial and Actius now seemed much loss was the emperor, not Actius, after all, who embodied imperial continues the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinia continues to the first time since reaching the first time s nuity. For the first time since reaching adulthood, Valentinian could be generalissimo. Aetine dare to contemplate life without his generalissimo. Aetius perhapi dare to contemplate me which might be another reason why he rited sensed the danger, which might be another reason why he rited sensed the usinger, which adding the marriage issue to Valentinian's list of grievances. For all in the darks emphasis on consensus, sharks always lurked in the deeper water of Roman imperial politics; now, individuals in the emperor's entourage caught the first faint scent of blood. Of the plot that eventually brough Actius down we are pretty well informed, thanks again to the labour of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. An account survives in another of his works: Excerpts concerning Plots. The fall of Aetius is preserved in a fragment from the history of a certain John of Antioch, but he was late compiler and probably drew primarily on the history of Prison So it is again the Priscus-Constantine axis that tells us what we want

There were two main conspirators. The first was a Roman sensor of high birth named Petronius Maximus. He had begun his cares before Aetius came to power, but was clearly considered an Aetius loyalist. Between 439 and 441 he held the important post of Praetonia Prefect of Italy, and was named consul for a second time in 443-both appointments taking place during Aetius' pre-eminence.42 The second was drawn from the A-list of likely suspects in any Roman palace place the eunuch head of the emperor's household Heraclius, the primiters sacri cubiculi (Chief of the Sacred Bedroom). Armed with two issues with which to work on Valentinian, and aided by the fact that Hunnic threat had receded, the plotters did their worst.

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE Aetius was explaining the finances and calculating the tax shout Valentinian suddenly leaped un from that he would not t Aerius was explaining the tax shout Valentinian suddenly leaped up from his revenues, and cried out that he would no longer be abused by the same and cried out that he would no longer be abused by the same and cried out that he would no longer be abused by the same and cried out that he would no longer be abused by the same and calculating the tax with a shout that he would no longer be abused by such revenues, with a cried out that he would no longer be abused by such throng and cried out that was stunned by this unexponents. revenue and cried out while Aetius was stunned by this unexpected rage throne and cried out while Aetius was stunned by this unexpected rage throne area attempting to calm his irrational outburst Wall was attempting to calm his irrational outburst was attempti there's wine to calm his irrational outburst, Valentinian and was sword from his scabbard and, together with Lindham his sword from his scabbard and together with his sword from attempung attempung a scabbard and, together with Heraclius, and was sword from his scabbard under his cloak. fell was carrying a knife ready under his cloak. his sword has sword has knife ready under his cloak . . . fell upon him. who was carrying a knife ready under his cloak . . . fell upon him.

Attacked simultaneously by emperor and eunuch, on 21 or 22 Septem-Attacked simultaneously in the palace. His fall was followed by the bet 454 Actius lay dead in the palace. Chief among the victima be 454 Aetius 103 Aetius 103 Chief among the victims was Aetius' praetorian Prefect of Italy, a senator by the round of Discounting the victims was Aetius' ourent praetorian Prefect of Italy, a senator by the name of Boethius, current praetorian philosopher.

gradiather of the famous philosopher. valentinian had waited until his thirties, but he had finally broken Valentially broken free. Unfortunately for him, he was not nearly as successful as the fee. Union and would be some 900 years later at rallying support young sterwards. For one thing, the conspirators soon fell out among themselves:

After the murder of Aetius, Maximus paid court to Valentinian hoping that he would be made consul, and when he failed to achieve this, he wished to become Patrician. But Heraclius ... acting from the same ambition and not wishing a counter-balance to his own power, thwarted Maximus' efforts by persuading Valentinian that, now he had freed himself from the oppression of Aetius, he should not transfer his power to others.

Old habits die hard, and even after Aetius' death Valentinian was not really in charge. The challenge was on to run him, especially as he had no male offspring, which meant that, in the longer term, the imperial succession remained an open race. Once it became clear that he was getting nowhere by persuasion, Maximus turned again to deadlier methods, this time suborning two guards officers, Optila and Thraustila, who had been close to Aetius. Priscus relates that, on 16 March 455:

Valentinian decided to go riding [in Rome] on the Campus Martius ... When he dismounted from his horse and was walking off to practise archery, Optila and his followers . . . attacked him. Optila struck Valentinian across the side of the head and, when he turned to see who had struck him, felled him with a second

blow to the face. Thraustila cut down Heraclius, and both took the emperor's diadem and horse and rode on or blow to the face. Thrausura can them took the emperor's diadem and horse and rode of to

So perished Valentinian, it is after the thurse that always follows there was no read rule rule of the was no read. Actius. This is the kind of positive of always followed regime change in the Empire. After years of of autocratic rule, albeit case more a regency, there was no ready-made regime that hear hastily constructed the regime that he regime t regime change in the Emphr. regime change in the Emphr. in this case more a regency, there was no ready-made regime regime to the constructed by inches in this case more a regency, in this case more a regency, waiting. As usual, a coalition had been hastily constructed by individual to the construction of sharing power with one analysis of the construction of the waiting. As usual, a countrol with one intention of sharing power with one another uals who had no intention of Aetius' fall was nothing one another uals who had no internet.

uals who had no internet.

afterwards. But if the pattern of Aetius' fall was nothing out of the fact that it failed to generate an immediate on the afterwards. But it the pattern ordinary, and the fact that it failed to generate an immediate successor other features were highly particular. Fascing of the ordinary, and the race unactive successor hardly surprising, other features were highly particular. Fascinating in the objection of Aetius, originally appearing in the objection of the contraction of the objection of the object hardly surprising, outer the for Aetius, originally appearing in Priscut this respect is the obituary for Aetius, originally appearing in Priscut

Through his alliance with the barbarians, he had protected place dia, Valentinian's mother, and her son while he was a child When Boniface crossed from North Africa with a large army, he out-generalled him . . . Felix, who was his fellow general, he killed by cunning when he learned that he was preparing to destroy him at Placidia's suggestion. He crushed the [Visigoths] who were encroaching on Roman territory, and he brought to heel the [Bagaudae] . . . In short, he wielded enormous power, so that not only kings but neighbouring peoples came at his order.

As obituaries go, it's pretty succinct, and it captures the mix of plotting at court and campaigning in the field that was the reality of Aetius' political life. What is especially interesting is the mention in its opening words of Aetius' dependence on an alliance with 'barbarians'. Not just any barbarians, but one group in particular: the Huns. As the passage suggests, Aetius' career was founded upon his Hunnic alliance. It was the Huns who sustained him when he seemed about to lose civil was - first in 425 as the usurpation of John unravelled, and again in 43 when Boniface defeated him at their first confrontation. And as we saw in Change of the saw i saw in Chapter 6, Hunnic troops played a central role in his restoration of order in C. of order in Gaul in the 430s, particularly in his defeats of the Burgundian and the same many Burgundians and Visigoths. Actius' death was far more than one man's tragedy it also tragedy. It also marked the end of an era. The death of Attila and disappearance of attraction of a state of the end of an era. disappearance of the Hunnic Empire not only made it possible for

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE to contemplate life without Aetius, it also undermined the which Aetius had kept the without the Himself balance of powers without the Himself balance Aetius without the Himself balance of Aetius without Aetius wi without had kept the western without the Huns had been surplus business. Actius needed to find White balance of Powers without the Huns had been surplus to business. Aetius without to find a new mechanism of powers without the Huns had been surplus to find a new mechanism of powers in the business. Where it is successors needed to find a new mechanism of powers in the business. business. Actus williout the riuns had been surplus to find a new mechanism for this successors needed to find a new mechanism for position the west.

sweining the West. Brave New World

THE KEY TO understanding the new political order brought on by the THE RET TO UNDERSTANDING THE FORMULA ORDER brought on by the sinction of Hunnic power is provided by virtually the first act of sinctionalized regime of Petronius Maximus.

ainction with regime of Petronius Maximus. thort-lived regard Valentinian III on 16 March 455, he was pro-Having multiple following day. His hands had barely grasped the dimed emperor when he sent an ambassador to solicit the support of imperial sceptre who had been settled in imperial scepus who had been settled in south-western France the powering was a some of his newly appointed military ince 418. The man he chose was one of his newly appointed military ommanders, perhaps commanding general in Gaul (magister militum Gallias), Eparchius Avitus. Avitus was a Gallic aristocrat of impecable fortune and education. Descended from high office-holders, he was related to a network of important families, and his estates centred on Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne. He had served with distinction under Aetius in the campaigns against the Norici and Burgundians in the 430s, then followed this up with a spell as supreme civilian administrator in Gaul - Praetorian Prefect - between 439 and 441. At that point he left office, possibly through natural rotation or because he fell out with Aetius, to return to prominence about a decade later. He then played a major role in negotiating the Visigothic assistance that helped Aetius repel Attila's assault on Gaul in 451.44 In every way, therefore, Avitus was an excellent choice. Close to Aetius, but not too close, he had a good track record and connections with both the Gallic aristocracy and the Goths.

From Avitus himself, no writings have survived. As more than Partial compensation, however, we have a collection of poetry and letters from the compensation of poetry and letters from his son-in-law, a certain Gaius Sollius Modestus Apollinaris Sidonius (1). The name is Sidonius (who has already been cited in this book). The name is generally the sidonius of this book. generally shortened for sanity's sake to Sidonius. As his marriage alliance with the family of Avitus might suggest, Sidonius derived from Gallic land Gallic landowning stock of similar standing - its main estates were

THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE situated around Lyon in the Rhône valley. His father had been past, Sidonius' Writings tend been writings tend been past, bolder been past situated around Lyon in the RHOHE VALLEY. Fils father had be praetorian Prefect of Gaul himself about a decade after Avitus, had be when any decent-thinking the to get to get the state of Praetorian Prefect of Gaul nimsen about a declare after Avitus, holds be descent-thinking chap value to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the post in 448/9.45 In the past, Sidonius' writings tended to get the past tended to get tended to get tended to get tended to get the past tended to get tended tended to get tended t the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered writings tended to to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the rather bad press. At a time when any decent-thinking tended to the classical Latin (first-century BC or AD) he was believed to the was believed to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the post in 448/9.45 In the past, ordered to the past, ord rather bad press. At a time when any accommon the chap valued by standards of the classical Latin (first-century BC or AD) he was brought the classical with the class work could with the class with the class work could with the class with the class work could with the class with standards of the classical Lauri (IIII) standards of the classical Lauri (IIII) he was brough up on, the complexities and allusiveness of Sidonius' work could be if not shock. Compared with the clarity and many and many aggravate, if not snock. Compared to the local showing off seemed the height of the Victorian era, Sir Samuel of the Victorian era, factness of, say, Caesar, ins local factness of, say, caesar, say, cae

[Sidonius] is essentially a literary man, of the stamp which this [Sidomus] is essentially, age of decadence [the fifth century] most admired. He is a stylist, not a thinker or inquirer. There is little doubt that he valued his own compositions not for their substance, but for those character. istics of style which we now think most worthless or even repulsive in them, the childish conceits, the meaningless antitheses, the torture applied to language so as to give an air of interest and distinction to the trivial commonplace of a colourless

Even in translation, Sidonius can drive you crazy with his inability $\mathfrak w$ call a spade a spade, and there's no doubt he spent a lot of time trying to say things in as complicated a way as possible. One of his later letters contains a nicely illuminating comment, delivered at a moment when he thought that the literary audience he had been educated to address had gone for ever: 'I am putting together the rest of my lenen in more everyday language; it is not worth embellishing phrases which may never be published.'47 But it is not fair to judge fifth-century style by first-century standards, and more recent commentators on late Roman Latin (not to mention late Roman Greek) have been less quid to condemn the stylistic complexities that were the height of artistic complexities that the complexitie chic in the fourth and fifth centuries. 48 An age that can see chain-sawed cows in preservative as art is by definition unlikely to judge other artistic endeavours by rigid universal standards.

In any case, the issue of whether Sidonius wrote 'good' Latin or is heside at historical not is beside the point, since there is no doubting the historical importance of historical impo importance of his oeuvre. The earliest of his extant writings date from the mid-450s the last of the earliest of his extant writings date from the mid-450s the last of his extant writings date from the mid-450s the his extant writings date the mid-450s, the latest to about 480, but the bulk fall into a twenty year period after the state of his extant writings a twenty year period after 455. He knew pretty much everyone who was anyout south-eastern, Gaul, and the great and the good in his letters, which, unlike those of Symmothern prominently in his letters of policies. pouthern, especially source ascern, Gaul, and the great and the good which, unlike those of Symmachus, matters of political substance when among the prominently in his letters, which, unlike those of Symmachus, matters of political substance when among the political substance when among the state of them are a some of them. mount in the state of symmachus, unuke those of Symmachus, matters of political substance when appropritis poems, or some of them, are equally important. Sidetis poems, or some of them, are equally important. but he sitate to discuss inatters of political substance when appropri-to the sitate to discuss inatters of political substance when appropri-to he sitate to discuss inatters of political substance when appropri-tion of them, are equally important. Sidonius was at the political substance when appropri-it for the sitate to discuss inatters of political substance when appropri-it for the sitate to discuss inatters of political substance when appropri-it for the sitate to discuss inatters of them, are equally important. Sidonius was at the political substance when appropri-it for the sitate to discuss inatters of them, are equally important. Sidonius was at the political substance when appropri-it for the sitate to discuss inatters of the political substance when appropri-ity for the sitate to discuss in the political substance when appropri-ity for the sitate to discuss in the political substance when appropri-ity for the sitate to discuss in the political substance when appropri-ity for the sitate to discuss in the political substance when appropri-ity for the sitate to discuss in the political substance when appropri-ity for the political substance when appropri-tical substance with the political substance with the politic this poems, or some involved in politics, and for emperors to court applicant enough to be involved in mportant enough to have for his support, but he was not important enough to have of this support, but he was not important enough to have to face in for his support, when their regime collapsed. Recognized as for his support, when their regime collapsed. Recognized as one of the recution when this age, he served a succession of a support of the recution are straight of his age, he served a succession of a support of the recution are straight of his age, he served a succession of a support of the recution are support of the s decution when the age, he served a succession of emperors who leading stylists of his age, he served a succession of emperors who leading this talents as a writer of panegyrics – keyword beding stylists of the stylist bew on his talents as we have met such texts before, and while they certainly their praise. We have met such texts before, and while they certainly their praise. We have the you or I might recognize it, they have the huge don't tell the truth as you or I might recognize it, they have the huge don't tell the day access to the world as particular regimes wished it intue or giving Wished it robe portrayed. Sidonius, like Themistius and Merobaudes before him,

was a propagandist. From Sidonius' account it emerges without a shadow of doubt that Petronius Maximus sent Avitus to the Visigoths to solicit their support for his regime. Sidonius, of course, dressed this bald fact up a little. As he portrays it, the Visigoths, after hearing of the murder of Valentinian II, were preparing to launch a hostile takeover bid for the entire Roman west, when news of the approach of Avitus filled them with

sudden panic:49

One of the Goths, who had reforged his pruning-hook and was shaping a sword with blows on the anvil and sharpening it with a stone, a man already prepared to rouse himself to fury at the sound of the trumpet and looking at any moment with manifold slaughter to bury the ground under unburied foes, cried out, as soon as the name of the approaching Avitus was clearly proclaimed: 'War is no more! Give me the plough again!'

You can see why those brought up on the tenets of classical Latin might find Sidonius' verbiage annoying, but the rhetoric is anything but pointless. It gives us a clear picture of his father-in-law as the one man able to dissuade the Visigoths from launching war. The same imaginary Goth goes on to declaim that, far from being mere onlookers, his a ers, his people will now lend their military assistance to the new tenime by Avirus: 'Nav. if I regime and precisely because it is sponsored by Avitus: 'Nay, if I have an in action before this, have gained a right knowledge of you [Avitus] in action before this, your appears I shall have permission to Your auxiliary trooper will I be; thus at least I shall have permission to fight; up fight.' What strikes you here is the exaggerated presentation of Avitus'

importance. Earlier in the poem, likewise, when talking of Active deed without you [Avitus]. ale. | glorida. importance. Earlier in the poem, make when talking of Active he was, did no deed without you [Avitus], although you have doubt performed useful without hough you. successes of the 430s, Sidonius excess introduct. The [Aetius] of Aetius arms as he was, did no deed without you [Avitus], although you without him.' Avitus no doubt performed useful service to he without him in the Avitice to he arms as he was, did no deeu without you tryitus, although you to many without him.' Avitus no doubt performed useful service to the adds, who had a service to the many without him.' Avitus no double perfectly well without him in the service to the no disputing that Aetius that Aetius that Aetius that Aetius that Aetius the but Aetius managed perrecuy well but Aetius when the later slipped out of office. There can be no disputing that Aetius well but Aetius was a support of the later than the la

dominant partner.

But irritation at Sidonius' hyperbole must not distract us from the distract us from the But irritation at Sidolinas Agricultus Maximus' first move as emperor between the Constantius and Aetius had strained every political historical significance of rectangles and Aetius had strained every political sines.

Both Flavius Constantius and Aetius had strained every political sines.

La Visiooths from increasing their influence within train. Both Flavius Constantius and to prevent the Visigoths from increasing their influence within western Alaric and his brother-in-law Athaulf had how to be the constant of the c imperial politics. Alaric and his brother-in-law Athaulf had both had visions, if fleeting, of the Goths as protectors of the western Empire a deal whereby he would become visions, it needing, of the Alaric had offered Honorius a deal whereby he would become senior had big Goths be settled not far from the Senior general at court, and his Goths be settled not far from Ravena Athaulf married Honorius' sister and named his son Theodosius, But Constantius and Aetius, those guardians of the western Empire, but resisted such pretensions; they had been willing to employ the Goth as junior allies against the Vandals, Alans and Suevi, but that was a far as it went. Aetius had preferred to pay and deploy Huns to kep the Goths within this very real political boundary rather than gran them a broader role in the business of Empire. Avitus' embassy, which as Sidonius makes clear, sought from the Visigoths not just peaceful acquiescence but a military alliance, reversed at a stroke a policy that had kept the Empire afloat for forty years.

The immediate aftermath only reinforces the point. While Avitus was still with the Visigoths, the Vandals under the leadership of Geiseric launched a naval expedition from North Africa which brough their forces to the outskirts of Rome. In part, its aim was fun and profit, but it also had more substantial motives. As part of the diplomatic horse-trading that had followed the frustration of Activition attempts to reconquer North Africa, Huneric, eldest son of the Vandaking Colored Agricultural Stransform king Geiseric, had been betrothed to Eudocia, daughter of Valentinia III. On seizing power, however, in an attempt to add extra credibility to his new-results to his new-results to his new-results. to his usurping regime, Petronius Maximus married Budodia to bus own son Palloding 1911 own son Palladius. The Vandal attack on Rome was also made, in outrage at here. in outrage at being cheated, as Geiseric saw it, of this chance to the great game and a second state of the great game and a second sec the great game of imperial politics. Hearing of the Vandals' and Maximus

THE FALL OF THE HUNNIC EMPIRE panicked, mounted a horse and fled. The imperial bodyguard and around him whom he particularly manufacture persons panicked, mounted a mound him whom he particularly trusted around him saw him leaving abused him and those who saw him leaving abused him and those him, and those who saw him leaving abused him and those who saw him and those who sa portion free persons around ne particularly trusted hose free him, and those who saw him leaving abused him and deserted him for his cowardice. As he was about to leave at those him, and those with saw min leaving abused him and described him for his cowardice. As he was about to leave the city, revited him for cock, hitting him on the temple and Linear threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and Linear threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and Linear threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and Linear threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and Linear three threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and Linear three described him for his cowards to leave the city, reviled him for his cowards him on the temple and killing him.

someone threw a rock, hitting him on the temple and killing him.

someone threw a rock, tore it to pieces and with all or cowd fell upon his body, tore it to pieces and with all or cowd fell upon his body. the crowd fell upon his body, tore it to pieces and with shouts of the crowd fell upon his about on a pole. 50 The crown is about on a pole. so the property of the limbs about on a pole. so

go ended the reign of Petronius Maximus, on 31 May 455; he had been than two and a half months go endea use room one than two and a half months. when the imperial capital was sacked for the second time, the When the was more serious than in 410. Geiseric's Vandals sustained was more much treasured taking much treasured. damage sustained staking much treasure and many prisoners back looted and ransacked, taking much treasure and many prisoners back looted and to Carthage, including the widow of Valentinian III, her with them and Gaudentius, the surviving son of Aetius. 11 Upon hearing this news, Avitus immediately made his own bid for the throne, declaring himself emperor while still at the Visigothic court in Bordeaux. It was later, on 9 July that year, that his claim was ratified by a group of Gallic aristocrats at Arles, the regional capital. From Arles, not long afterwards, Avitus moved on triumphantly to Rome and began negotiations for recognition with Constantinople. The senior Roman army commanders in Italy - Majorian and Ricimer were ready to accept him because they were afraid of the Visigothic

military power at his disposal.52 A new order was thus born. Instead of western imperial regimes looking to keep the Visigoths and other immigrants at arm's length, the newcomers had established themselves as part of the western Empire's body politic. For the first time, a Visigothic king had played a key role in deciding the imperial succession.

The full significance of this revolution needs to be underlined. Without the Huns to keep the Goths and other immigrants into the Roman west in check, there was no choice but to embrace them. The Western Empire's military reservoirs were no longer full enough for it to continue to exclude them from central politics. The ambition first shown by Alaric and Athaulf, and later by Geiseric in his desire to marry his son to an imperial princess, had come to fruition. Contem-Poraries were fully aware of the political turn-around represented by Avitus' elevation. Since time immemorial, the traditional education had been as the 'other'. the had portrayed barbarians - including Visigoths - as the 'other', the

irrational, the uneducated; the destructive force constantly the visigoths now having the south-ware having irrational, the uneducated; the uestimate to the Roman Empire. In a sense, with the Visigoths now threaten seneration as minor Roman allies in south-western having the prepared. Nonetheless, Avitus' replaced the Roman Empire. In a sense, which is south to be a generation as minor Roman allies in south we have the south we have the Visigothic alliance was bound to be a sense, which is south to be a sense of the sense of th the Roman Burpanetric for a generation as minor Roman aures in south-western ving ground had been well prepared. Nonetheless, Avitus' regime with the better demonstrated than in the control to be control. ground had been well prepared. In one case, Avitus' regime was bound to be was been too well aware that its Visigothic alliance was bound to be was the control of the was the control of the control of the was the w too well aware that its Visigotine amand was bound to be was sial. This is nowhere better demonstrated than in the control in a letter penned by him from the writing months of court was pound to be was the control in the early months. sial. This is nowhere better delitation that in the without the writing of Avitty of the private documents. He withing the country of the writing of the country of the cou Sidonius, in particular in a letter representation of the country with the country months of Avitus' letters are in no sense private documents. He with the country with the cou Visigothic king Theoderic II III LILE CALLY MONTHS OF AVITUAL Sidonius' letters are in no sense private documents. He wrote them for disseminating a point of the week. Sidonius' letters are in no sense provided by the wrote the wrote them has excellent mechanism for disseminating a point of view and the view and view short, an excellent mechanism for disseminating a point of view anow

Written to Avitus' son Agricola as a description of life at the Written to Avitus som Again and Nature's plan have joined together to endow him. Wisigothic court, it opens when a point together to endow him with the even the interest of the court of the a supreme perfection; and his character is such that even the jealous a sovereign has no power to rob it of its plantary. which hedges a sovereign has no power to rob it of its glones; We the king's day. Having started with a prayer then hear about the king's day. Having started with a prayer or two then hear about the Ring of the hunting and settling cases; then he spends the morning receiving embassies and settling cases; then hunting at which as in all the hunting. the afternoon, perhaps a little hunting, at which, as in all else, he

When one joins him at dinner . . . there is no unpolished conglom eration of discoloured old silver set by panting attendants on sagging tables; the weightiest thing on these occasions is the conversation. The viands attract by their skilful cookery, not by their costliness. Replenishment of goblets comes at such long intervals that there is more reason for the thirsty to complain than for the intoxicated to refrain. To sum up: you can find there Greek elegance, Gallic plenty, Italian briskness; the dignity of state, the attentiveness of a private home, the ordered discipline of royalty.54

The letter closes with a little joke at the king's expense. After dinner Theoderic liked to play a game of dice, and would show the proper spirit by protesting if he perceived that his rival was letting him will On the other hand, should you want a favour done, Sidonius notes, the thing are the thing to do was to let the king win, but without his noticing what were up to the let you were up to. This bit of patronizing aside, Sidonius' message could not be cleaned to not be clearer. Theoderic II was not your run-of-the-mill barbarian

by his senses, addicted to alcohol and the next adrenalin rush.

Roman' in the proper sense, one who had lead the was, in fact, a who ran his court his in the his senses, addition and the next adrenalin rush.

by his senses, addition in the proper sense, one who had learned from in fact, a 'Roman' in the proper sense, one who had learned him was, in fact, a 'Roman' in the proper sense, one who had learned him was, and self-discipline, who ran his court, his life – indeed him was, and self-discipline, who ran harmone. He was a hallowed Roman manner. byen proper sense, one who had learned file was and self-discipline, who ran his court, his life – indeed, himself and self-discipline, who manner. He was a man one could the time have no idea what life was a man one could be to the time the time have no idea what life was a man one could be time. was, and self-discipline, and reson time-hallowed no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea what life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with I have no idea when the life was really like at the Visigothic business with the visigothic business with the visigothic business with the visigothic business with the visigothic business w must with I nave Avitus' association with Theoderic, Theoderic had husiness with to justify Avitus' association with Theoderic, Theoderic had out, nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular resented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues, and Sidonius dular nresented as possessing all the virtues nresented business but to justify but to justi course presented as programmers, and oldonius duly obliged. Barbarians were being presented the revolution was gathering pace. Barbarians were being presented the revolution to justify the inescapable reality that, since the commans to justify the inescapable reality that, since the commans to justify the inescapable reality that, since the commans to justify the inescapable reality that, since the commans to justify the inescapable reality that, since the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the inescapable reality that is not presented to the commans to justify the commans to the revolution was been inescapable reality that, since they could no so possible reality that inescapable reality that included in the excluded, they now had to be included in the excluded. Romans to justify now had to be included in the construction longer be excluded, they now had to be included in the construction longer be political regimes in the west. longer be political regimes in the west.

At first sight, this inclusion of the alien would not seem to be a At first signs, to the integrity of the Empire. Theoderic was Roman mortal blow to the integrity of the saw the pool mortal blow willing to play along; he saw the need to portray him as enough to be willing in order to satisfy landowning critical blow. good Roman in order to satisfy landowning opinion. There were, a good Roughe of very big catches which made a Romanohowever, military alliance not quite the asset you might initially visigothic military alliance not quite the asset you might initially Visigouile Suppose. First, political support always came at a price. Theoderic was supposed was entirely happy to support Avitus' bid for power, but, not unreasonably, be expected something in return. In this instance, his desired reward was a free hand in Spain where, as we have seen, the Suevi had been running riot since Aetius' attention had been turned towards the Danube in the early 440s. Theoderic's request was granted, and he promptly sent a Visigothic army to Spain under the auspices of Avitus' regime, notionally to curb Suevic depredations. Hitherto, of course, when the Visigoths had been deployed in Spain, it was always in conjunction with Roman forces. This time, Theoderic was left to operate essentially on his own initiative, and we have a first-hand -Spanish - description of what happened. The Visigothic army defeated the Suevi, we are told, capturing and executing their king. They also took every opportunity, both during the assault and in the cleaning-up operations that followed, to gather as much booty as they could, sacking and pillaging, amongst others, the towns of Braga, Asturica and Palentia. Not only did the Goths destroy the kingdom of the Suevi, they also helped themselves uninhibitedly to the wealth of Spain.35 Just like Attila, Theoderic had warriors to satisfy. His willingness to support Avitus was based on calculations of profits, and a lucrative Spanish spree was just the thing.

Second, the inclusion of barbarians into the political game of

regime-building in the Roman west meant that there were no oroups manoeuvring for position around the imperial to income had to income regime-building in the Roman west means there were now more groups manoeuvring for position around the imperial of the imperia more groups manoeuvring for position around the imperial to satisfy three army groups – two main ones in Italy and companies and Before 450, any functioning western regard to incorporate the broadly satisfy three army groups – two main ones in italy ones in Italy and the imperial to incorporate and the imperial to inc broadly satisfy three army groups
and a lesser one in Illyricum – plus the landed aristocracies and to be accommodate.

I who occupied the key posts in the imperial bureaucracy and to be accommodate. and a lesser one in Illyricum – prosession the imperial bureauctary of Constantinople also had to be accommodated. As in the Gaul, who occupied the key possed and a lour of the second of anough of anou desires of Constantinople also have the divided between different eastern emperors disposed of enough clout and brute for of Valentinian III, should we disposed of enough clout and brute for their own candidate. Though too far away to rule the candidates, eastern emperors and too far away to rule the form over the charge to impose their own candidate.

directly, Constantinople could exercise a virtual veto over the the war interested parties. Incorporating this many interest. directly, Constantinopie could of the other interested parties. Incorporating this many interests to the choice a long-drawn-out business make arriving at a stable outcome a long-drawn-out business.

AFTER THE COLLAPSE of the Hunnic Empire, the Burgundians and to start inckeving for position and the Vandals were the next to start jockeying for position and clamounty Vandals were use the Burgundians had been settled by Aetius around lake Geneva in the mid-430s. Twenty years later, they took advantage of the new balance of power in the west to acquire a number of other Roman cities and the revenues they brought with them from the territories in the Rhône valley: Besançon, le Valais, Grenoble, Autun Chalon-sur-Saône and Lyon. 56 The Vandal-Alan coalition's sack of Rome in 455, as we have seen, betrayed a desire to participate in imperial politics. On the death of Valentinian, Victor of Vita tells \boldsymbol{u}_{s}^{π} Geiseric too, expanding his powerbase, seized control of Tripolium, Numidia and Mauretania, together with Sicily, Corsica and the Balear ics. Allowing just some of the barbarian powers to participate in the Empire massively complicated western politics; and the greater the number, the harder it was to find sufficient rewards to generate long term coalition.

A strong sense of the underlying tensions that made the regime of Avitus essentially unstable emerges from the second of Sidonius poem to survive from this period. On 1 January 456, when the emperor assumed the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome, his ever loyal son-in-law was called upon to make the consulship in Rome. upon to make a speech on his behalf. It began, not surprisingly, establishing the establishing the emperor's overwhelming suitability for office. In down so, Sidonius took the opportunity to make some pointed companions. In particular, he discontinuous to make some pointed companions and the sound of In particular, he dismissed Valentinian III as a 'mad eunuch' (smell amens), and come militally and come mil amens), and contrasted his style of leadership with the military

brought to the job. Turning to the key issue with the king of the Visigoths, Sidonius have with the king of the Visigoths with phitical skills that Avitus brought to the Visigoths, Sidonius handled with relationship with the king of the Visigoths, Sidonius handled with subtlety, but his intent was a distributed with subtlety, but his intent was a distributed with subtlety. philital relationship with the subject with subtlety, but his intent was clear of Avitus had potentially explosive with vigour that Avitus had never heart potentially priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart heart potentially priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart potentially priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued with vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued the vigour that Avitus had never heart priest, he argued the vigour that a vigour that of April Subject vision subject, but his intent was clear been one potentially explosive with vigour that Avitus had never been one prough up to the Visigothic court. He had been there as a vision up to the vision to the visio bis purply, he argued with vigorial that Avitus had never been one group up to the Visigothic court. He had been there as a young man, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic bind's waryone knew, in the 420s, waryone knew, in the 420s, waryone knew, in the 420s, waryone knew, waryone kn group to the visigothic king] desired were there as a young man, in the 420s, when '[the Visigothic king] desired a everyone knew, in the 420s, as one of his own him would be a singly to have you [Avitus] as one of h everyone knew, in [Avitus] as one of his own, but you scorned of the friend rather than the Roman.'58 Sidonius than the friend rather than the roman.'58 Sidonius than the scorned of the friend rather than the Roman.'58 Sidonius than the scorned of the friend rather than the Roman.'58 Sidonius than the scorned of the sco officed rather than the Roman.'s Sidonius then focused on the friend rather than the Avitus took a family incident in the 430s when Avitus took a family incident in t the menu ratio the 430s when Avitus took a terrible revenge mer small incident in the 430s who had wounded one of the marauding Visigoth who had wounded one small including Visigoth who had wounded one of his servants:

When first they approached, breast to breast and face to face, the When nest tale, the other [the Goth] with fear ... one payment the first bout, the second, the third have been fought, But when the upraised spear comes and pierces the man of blood; his see! The upraised spear comes and pierces the man of blood; his breast was transfixed and his corselet twice split, giving way even where it covered the back; and as the blood came throbbing through the two gaps the separate wounds took away the life that each of them might claim.

Translated into English (or even into Latin), Sidonius is saying that Avitus found the Visigothic bastard who'd hurt his man, and ran him so far through with his spear that it came out the other side. Translated into politico-speak, the message is that Avitus was no Visigoth-loving traitor but a true Roman who had given the barbarians as hard a kicking as even the fiercest hawk could desire.

All of this was addressed to the suspicions of Sidonius' audience of Italo-Roman senators and generals, as was, above all, his account of the new emperor's elevation. On hearing of the deaths of Aetius and Valentinian, the Visigoths had begun to plan their own wars of conquest. 59 Then into the Visigothic camp strode Avitus, and everything changed. By his presence alone he spread panic among them, and such was their fear of him that the Visigoths' immediate impulse Was to try to please him by engaging in a military alliance. But whether Avitus should declare himself emperor was his decision alone. As for the Visigothic king, Sidonius has him say:

We do not force [the purple] on you, but we do beg you; with You as leader I am a friend of Rome, with you as emperor I am her soldier. You are not stealing the sovereignty from any man; no Augustus holds the Latian hills, a palace Without a master is only to serve you; but if Gaul should for world would for a yours ... My part is only to serve you; but if Gaul should force would otherwise perish. yours ... My part is only to see, out it Gaul should should boy to see you, as she has the right to do, the world would love force

We see from this special pleading, and the allusion to the normal in Italy, exactly where the audience's political sensitivities. We see from this special pressure, allusion to the vacuum in Italy, exactly where the audience's political sensitivities of the Visional and addressing. vacuum in Italy, exactly where Sidonius was now addressing Arbaulf The annear no more than a creature of the Visigoths after the law. To the Italians, the audience of the Visigoths after the pattern of the speech respondent might appear no more than a consider the patter that Avitus was his own man. You only had to look at the patter than the speech responded to look at the patter than the patte of Priscus Attalus under the priscus attalus insisting that Avitus was included the land to look at land to purple, if unwillingly, because he was the only man who could be straitened times, the bark. military power was necessary to the safety of the Empire, but Aving

It was a good try. And so much for the claim that Sidonius lated ideas. But the Italian audience, particularly the army men among them, were having none of it. The sources insist, as we have the that the Roman army of Italy only ever tolerated Avitus because he had the military backing of the Visigoths. When, in 456, the Visigoth became too deeply embroiled in Spain to intervene any further in lith. the two main Roman commanders, Majorian and Ricimer, withdre their allegiance. On 17 October that year they gave battle to the fr forces Avitus could scrape together - presumably remnants of the Roman field army of Gaul - outside the city of Placentia in northern Italy. Avitus was beaten, forced to become the city's bishop, and ded shortly afterwards in mysterious circumstances.⁶⁰

We see here, then, in a nutshell the problem now facing the war Avitus had the support of the Visigoths, the support of at least some Gallic senators, and of some of the Roman army of Gaul. But find with the hostility of the Italian senators, and especially of the commanders of the Italian field army, the coalition didn't stand a change By the early 460s, the extent of the crisis in the west generated by collapse of Attila's Empire was clear. There were too many interest parties and not enough rewards to go round. Constantinople, however, had decided on one last throw of the dice.

50MB HISTORIANS HAVE CRITICIZED Constantinople for not doing in the fifth century to save the embattled west 50MB HISTORIANS

Note in the fifth century to save the embattled west. From the Notitia more in the fifth century we know that the east's armies and the same seems of the control of the pore in the first (see p. 246) we know that the east's armies recovered from portional to comprise, by the end of the fourth Digitation (see P. 200) by the end of the fourth century, a field Hadranople to comprise, by the end between four account regiments distributed between four accounts. Hadrianopie to grant distributed between four regional commands: of 191 regional commands:

of on the Persian front, one in Thrace, and two central, 'praesental' one on the Latin for 'stationed in the imperial presence'). Its amies (House presence). Its mobile forces, therefore, mustered between 65,000 and 100,000 men.¹ Also, the east disposed of numerous units of frontier garrison troops Also, unc. The archaeological field surveys of the last twenty years have confirmed, furthermore, that the fourth-century agricultural prosperity of the east's key provinces - Asia Minor, the Middle East and Egypt - showed no sign of slackening during the fifth. Some believe that the eastern Empire thus had the wherewithal to intervene effectively in the west, but chose not to. In the most radical statement of the case, it has been argued that Constantinople was happy to see barbarians settle on western territory for the disabling effect this had on the west's military establishment because it removed any possibility of an ambitious western pretender seeking to unseat his eastern counterpart and unite the Empire. This had happened periodically in the fourth century, when the emperors Constantine and Julian took over the entire Empire from an originally western power-base.2 But in fact, bearing in mind the problems it had to deal with on its own frontiers, Constantinople's record for supplying aid to the west in the fifth century is perfectly respectable.

Constantinople and the West

THE BASTERN Empire's military establishment was very substantial, but large but large numbers of troops had always to be committed to the two

key sectors of its eastern frontier in Armenia and Mesopotamia to imperial security lay, the and the law to imperial security lay, the and the law to imperial security lay, the law to imperial security lay to imperial security lay the law to im key sectors of its eastern frontier in Allineius and Mesopotania Rome confronted Persia. If you asked any fourth-century the main threat to imperial security lay, the answer when the section its new Sasanian rulers. And from the section when the section is new Sasanian rulers. And from the section when the section is new Sasanian rulers. Rome confronted Persia. Ir you asked any lourth century when the main threat to imperial security lay, the answer when heen Persia under its new Sasanian rulers. And from the the the same of the sam where the main threat to imperior where the answer when the Sasanian revolution worked its magic, person the the same magic, person the think the same magic, person to the ancient when the same magic, person to the same magic person to t have been Persia under its new Dasanian Tulers. And from the old century, when the Sasanian revolution worked its magic, pend the second great superpower of the ancient world. As we have the Sasanian. century, when the Sasanian revolution worked its magic, put the indeed the second great superpower of the ancient world. As we have second cricic that I are plunged to indeed the second great superposed by the Sasanians plunged the best that lasted the best the best that the best t earlier, the new military time at possible that last plunged the best plunged the best plunged the Empire 1 Roman Empire into a minitary and of fifty years. By the time of Diocletian in the 280s, the Empire had the necessary funding and manpower, but the process of fifty years. By the time of process of the undisputed power of its eastern neighbour was to adjustment to the undisputed power of its eastern neighbour was long or less unavoidated. and painful. The rise of Persia also made it more or less unavoidable and hence made it more or less unavoidable to have one emperor constantly in the east, and hence made power. sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing to hold ite on the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperial office in the late Roman period As a sharing a feature of the imperiod As a sharing a teature of the transformations, Rome began to hold its own again result of these transformations, repeats of such third-century repeats of such third-century and there were no fourth-century repeats of such third-century dis

When assessing the military contribution of the eastern Empire to the west in the fifth century, it is important to appreciate that, while broadly contained from about 300, the new Persian threat never disappeared. Even if there was less fighting - and what fighting there was largely confined itself to a wearying round of sieges and limited gains - the Sasanians maintained a constant presence in the strategic thinking of east Roman politicians and generals. Faced with the defeat of Julian's Persian expedition in 363, then the longer-term effects of the Hun-inspired mayhem on the Danube in the mid-370s, successive Roman emperors had been forced on two occasions to grant Sasanian rulers peace treaties they would normally only have dreamt about Following Julian's defeat, the emperor Jovian made humiliating comcessions of territory and bases in Mesopotamia. Valens made some preliminary noises, even moves, towards their recovery, but after his death at Hadrianople Theodosius not only confirmed Roman acceptance of the tance of these losses, but also did a deal over Armenia, the other great

bone of contention – and again, massively in Persia's favour (map 3).

These contention – and again, massively in Persia's favour (map 3). These concessions ushered in a relatively peaceful phase in Roman largely Persian relations, as Sasanian aspirations were, for the moment, largely satisfied satisfied. Anyway, Persia was facing nomad-inspired troubles of its own in two northern and modern in two northern frontier sectors: to the east in Transoxania (modern Uzbekistan) Uzbekistan), and in the Caucasus, in which Constantinople, too, had

Routes through the Caucasus led into Roman territory, if one carried straight, and into Persian territory, if one carried straight both. The great Humain both. Routes through the Caucasus led into Roman territory, if one carried straight on.

The great Hunnic raid of 395 was a provinces south the Huns had done both. The great Hunnic raid of 395 was a provinces and had done had done both. of the Black Sea has only in large area of the Design of the Black Sea has a large area of the Design of the Black Sea has a large area of the Design of the Black Sea has a large area of the Design of the Black Sea has a large area of the Black Sea has a large area. of the had done provinces south of the Black Sea but also the hot only large area of the Persian Empire. So in the hard surprisingly large hash the river only in Rollie's Provinces south of the Black Sea but also by the persian Empire. So, in this new both surprisingly when both Empires had Huns on their of compromise when both Empires had Huns on their both Empires had Huns on their minds, of compromise when both agreement for mutual defendance to an unprecedented agreement for mutual defendance. of compromise with an unprecedented agreement for mutual defence. The of came to an unprecedented agreement her mutual defence. The of came to an unprecedented agreement for mutual defence. The officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the key Darial Page of the officers would fortify and garrison the officers would fortify and to an unprecedent of mutual defence. The they came to an unprecedent and garrison the key Darial Pass through the perians would fortify and garrison the key Darial Pass through the perians and the Romans would help defrav the cores. Persians would not any Danial Pass through the Romans would help defray the costs. So tranquil caucasus, and the Romans at this time, in fact that the poman-Persian relations at this time, in fact that the Caucasus, and the costs. So tranquil costs. So tranquil relations at this time, in fact, that the myth arose refer Roman-Persian Shah had adopted Theodosius II as all the persian Shah had adopted were Roman-resonant had adopted Theodosius II, at the request of his that the Persian Shah had adopted Theodosius II, at the request of his that the emperor Arcadius. so as to smooth the little of the resonant content of the smooth that the request of his content of the resonant content of the resonat content of the resonant content content content content content that the Persian the amperor Arcadius, so as to smooth the boy's accession have father the emperor Arcadius, so have his father died. the throne (he was only six when his father died).

None of this meant, however, that Constantinople could afford to None of all of the fifth lower its guard. Troop numbers were perhaps reduced in the fifth lower has some spent on fortifications, but major forces still had to be kept on the eastern frontier. The Notitia Dignitatum - whose eastern sections date from about 395, after the Armenian accord - lists a field army of thirty-one regiments, roughly one-quarter of the whole, based in the east, together with 156 units of frontier garrison troops stationed in Armenia and the provinces comprising the Mesopotamian front, out of a total of 305 such units for the entire eastern Empire. And this in an era of relative stability. There were occasional quarrels with Persia, which sometimes came to blows, as in 421 and 441. The only reason the Persians didn't capitalize more on Constantinople's run-in with the Huns in the 440s seems to have been their own nomad problems.4

Just as, for Rome, Persia was the great enemy, so Rome was for Persia, and each particularly prized victories over the other. As we noted earlier, the provinces from Egypt to western Asia Minor were the eastern Empire's main source of revenue, and no emperor could afford to take chances with the region's security. As a result, Constanting tinople had to keep upwards of 40 per cent of its military committed to the Persian frontier, and another 92 units of garrison troops for the defence of Egypt and Libya. The only forces the eastern authorities could even think of using in the west were the one-sixth of its garrison troops stationed in the Balkans and the three-quarters of its field forces mustered in the Thracian and the two praesental armies.

Up until 450, Constantinople's capacity to help the west was also

deeply affected by the fact that it bore the brunt of Hunnic horizontal as 408 (see p. 196), Uldin had briefly seized the east Ropensis, and by 413 the long horizontal horizont deeply affected by the fact that it dole the difference of Hunnic house as 408 (see p. 196), Uldin had briefly seized the east Ropersis, and by 413 the east Ropersis a programme of east Ropersis. As early as 408 (see p. 196), Ulcum Hard District Seized the east Northern fortress of Castra Martis in Dacia Ripensis, and by 413 the east Roman to constant the Danubes and to constant to the Danubes and to constant the laboration of As early —
fortress of Castra Martis in Dalla authorities felt threatened enough to initiate a programme for the Danubes and to construct the martin of the authorities felt threatened enough to militate a programme for eather ing their riverine defences on the Danubes and to constitute the land in attempts to limit a few way. ing their riverine defences on the Daniel to Construct the landwalls around Constantinople (see p. 203). Then, just a few block that they mounted to limit the Rotter landwalls around Constantinopie (SCC P. 203). Then, just a few beat later, eastern forces engaged directly in attempts to limit the standard a major expedite. later, eastern forces engaged and the state of Hunnic power. Probably in 421, they mounted a major expedition of Hunnic h of Hunnic power. Probably in 721, the following a major expedition into Pannonia which was already, if temporarily, in Hunnic hands a large group of Goths from the Huns' control and reachest the state of the following the state of the following the follo extracted a large group of Goths from the Huns' control and resented hands. The next two decadas. extracted a large group of Godis The next two decades were the ambitions of Attila and his uncle, and even the state of the next two decades were the state of the next two decades were the state of the next two decades were th spent combating the ambitions of Attila and his uncle, and even after the again fell to the east Roman authorities to also Attila's death it again fell to the east Roman authorities to dean to the Hunnic Empire. As Attila's death it again to the wreck of the Hunnic Empire. As we saw that the remaining t in Chapter 8, it was the eastern Empire that the remaining som of Attila chose to invade in the later 460s. Slightly earlier in the decade east Roman forces had also been in action against armed fragment of Attila's disintegrating war machine, led by Hormidac and Bigelis la 460, likewise, the Amal-led Goths in Pannonia had invaded the eastern Empire to extract their 300 pounds of gold (see p. 368).7

Judged against this strategic background, where military commit ments could not be reduced on the Persian front, and where, thanks to the Huns, the Danube frontier required a greater share of resource than ever before, Constantinople's record in providing assistance to the west in the fifth century looks perfectly respectable. Although in the throes of fending off Uldin, Constantinople had sent troops to Honorius in 410, when Alaric had taken Rome and was threatening North Africa. Six units in all, numbering 4,000 men, arrived at a critical moment, putting new fight into Honorius when flight, or sharing power with usurpers, was on the cards. The force was enough to secure Ravenna, whose garrison was becoming mutinous, and bought enough time for the emperor to be rescued.8 In 425, likewise, Constantinople had tinople had committed its praesental troops in large numbers to the task of establishing Valentinian III on the throne, and in the 430s Aspar the general had a Geiseric 10 the general had done enough in North Africa to prompt Geiseric to negotiate the General had done enough in North Africa to prompt Geiseric to negotiate the first treaty, of 435, which denied him the conquest of Carthage and all again, the Carthage and the richest provinces of the region. In 440/1, again, the east had committee the region of the region of the region. east had committed so many of its Danubian and praesental troops to the projected accommand to the pro the projected east-west expedition to Africa, that the bureaucrat who

a mention in despatches and Attila and Bleda armines opportunity to unleash their armines armines armines of the state of ognized it received a management of the state of the stat

Although, as we saw in Chapter 7, Attila granted the eastern Although, as we saw in Chapter 7, Attila granted the eastern Although, as which are also as the east of propie an extraordate to fellow Romans. Troops – we are not told then bauk at its duty to Aetius to assist him in harassing at the many – were sent to Aetius to assist him in harassing at baulk at its were sent to Aetius to assist him in harassing the Hunnic how many were sent through northern Italy in 452. While at the Hunnic weeping through northern Italy in 452. how many were through northern Italy in 452, while other eastern amies sweeping through success in attacking Linear through the considerable success in attacking through the considerable success in attacking through the considerable success throug smies sweeping other eastern state that I will other eastern forces achieved considerable success in attacking Hunnic homelands.9 forces acriteved acriteved of an eastern state that had no interest in This is not the record of an eastern state that had no interest in This is not the west. Nor is there the slightest sign that Constantinople sustaining the west. Nor is there are sorted on the background to so had willed the barbarians to settle on western soil so as to weaken the power of the western emperors – not even, as used to be thought, to power that the extent of encouraging Alaric to transfer his Goths from the Balkans to Italy in 408. As Edward Thompson noted, choosing to fight and take what reprisals might come their way in 451/2, rather than gabbing Attila's generous peace and running, was a sign of real commitment on the part of Constantinople.10

Of course, in Constantinople emperors and - in particular imperial advisers came and went, and policies towards the west varied. As mentioned earlier, up to the death of Theodosius II in July 450, commitment to the west derived partly from the fact that eastern and western emperors belonged to the same Theodosian house. In sustaining his cousin Valentinian, therefore, Theodosius was also stressing his own family's credentials for rule. And the largest single eastern expeditionary force of the period was sent west in 425 for a Roman dvil war to put Valentinian III on the throne. But the catalogue of eastern assistance to the west cannot be reduced to mere dynastic selfinterest. Help continued to be given after Theodosius' death, not least when Attila was attacking Italy in 452. Equally important, this aid list is compiled from a miscellany of sources and is unlikely to be exhaustive. In particular, I suspect that regular financial assistance was sent west during these years, in addition to the periodic offerings of military manpower. Thus, the decision of the authorities in Constantinople to mount a major rescue bid on the west's behalf in the 460s was no sudden aberration from the norm.

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THE PALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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Regime Change, Anthemius and North Africa

THE MOST OBVIOUS problem lacing the Normalian West round about was a crisis of succession; since the death of Attila in 453 about the latest continuity. Valentinian III had been cut down by Aere by Aere. was a crisis of succession; since the was a crisis of succession; sinc been little continuity. Valentinal l bodyguards, egged on by removation, who seized the think but in no time at all was himself killed by the Roman mob think think think appointed himself emperor in collusion soon but in no time at all was multiple afterwards, Avitus had appointed himself emperor in collusion with landowning with afterwards, Avitus nau appoints the Visigoths and elements of the Gallo-Roman landowning and the Visigoths and elements. Then came his ousting in 456 by Rick. the Visigoths and elements. Then came his ousting in 456 by Ricing and commanders of the Italian field forces. This arms military establishments. The latest and Majorian, commanders of the Italian field forces. This army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest army was a single most powerful military-cum-political force in the latest a and Majorian, commanders of the single most powerful military-cum-political force in the two commanders would play a central bin the Roman west, and the two commanders would play a central kingnak.

Of the two, Ricimer is a particularly fascinating character. His grandfather was the Visigothic king Vallia who had negotiated with Flavius Constantius in 416, and on his mother's side he was descended from a princess of the Suevi. His sister married into the Burgundian royal house. Thus, in his family connections Ricimer reflects the revolutions that had recently brought so many autonomous groups of outsiders on to Roman soil. His career, however, was purely Roman and purely military, first reaching prominence under Aetius. Some have sought anti-Roman, pro-barbarian leanings in his policies, but none is apparent. Like Aetius and Stilicho, he was ready, when necessary, to make alliances with the new barbarian powers established in the west, but there is no sign that his genetic inheritance predisposed him to favour them at the expense of the central Roman authoritiesin fact, quite the opposite. He was very much the heir of Stilicho: well-connected barbarian proud to follow a Roman career, and who showed impeccable loyalty to the imperial ideal. Majorian too had served under Aetius, but, unlike Ricimer, was of a solidly Roman military family. His paternal grandfather had been a senior general in the 2700 mail to the the 370s, and his father an important bureaucrat under Aetius; Majorian himself h ian himself had eventually fallen out with Aetius, but Valentinian recalled him after the generalissimo's murder.11

Hostility to Avitus made allies out of Ricimer and Majorian but, ring removed to having removed him, they weren't quite sure what to do next. The result was an investment of the two result was an interregnum of several months. Eventually, the two Majorian emperor, and his installation was celebrated make Majorian emittial successes, the new regime fail. wided to make Majorian initial successes, the new regime failed to the west's problems, and Richard Asfinitive solution to the west's problems, and Richard Asfinitive solution to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and Richard Assimilation was celebrated to the west's problems, and the west's problems was celebrated to the west's problems, and the west's problems was celebrated to the west's problems was celebrated to the west's problems. definitive solution to the west's problems, and Ricimer and definitive quarrelled. On 2 August 461 Ricimer L. definitive solutions and Ricimer and definitive solutions are deposed, and executed five days later that his partner in crime deposed, and executed five days later to the day eventually deposed, and executed five days later. He then former partner in crime deposed Libius Severus to act on the former partner in an elderly senator called Libius Severus to act on the former partner in crime deposed. former partner in senator called Libius Severus to act as his new more man. On 19 November after another interregnum on the purple. However, he was not well received at for man. On the purple. However, he was not well received elsewhere in mixed to the purple. The commanders of what remained to particular, the commanders of what remained to the purple. mised to the purpose, the commanders of what remained of the Gallic the west in particular, the commanders and Marcellinus the west. In passage of the Gallic and Marcellinus, were disgruntled and Illyrian field armies, Aegidius and Marcellinus, were disgruntled

The death of Valentinian III thus unleashed one of those bouts of potracted instability that were inherent to the Roman political system. Faced with nothing less than anarchy, Constantinople did what it could promote stability. In the case of Avitus, the eastern emperor Marcian had refused to grant recognition, but negotiations with Constantinople over the accession of Majorian were eventually successful. After his mitial installation, he was proclaimed emperor a second time on 28 December 457, quite probably on the receipt of recognition granted by Marcian's successor Leo I. That Majorian's regime had been recognized reflected the fact that it was much more broadly supported than that of Avitus. The same was not true, however, of Libius Severus - this time Leo would not play ball, and Severus remained resolutely unrecognized in Constantinople for the rest of his life.

As western regimes came and went, then, eastern emperors tried, it seems, to identify and support those with some real hope of generating stability. It was to preserve his position in Italy that Ricimer had appointed the harmless Severus. But as Aetius had shown, political longevity was inseparable from military success, and Ricimer also needed to defend Italy effectively, as well as the rest of the Roman west. For both of these objectives recognition and assistance from Constantinople were vital. Once it became clear that Severus was unacceptable to Leo - not least because of the opposition he had triggered in Aegidius and Marcellinus - he became an obstacle to Ricimer's policies. Severus eventually died at a suspiciously convenient moment, in November 465. One early sixth-century source suggests that he was poisoned, while Sidonius goes out of his way to stress that he had died by natural causes. The comment stands out so starkly in the middle of a passage devoted to other matters that it really does

look like a case of protesting too much. Whatever the truth of the tru tter, with Severus dead, negotiation did nothing to address the Roman the Ro But granting or withnounced second and much more fundamental problem facing to address the second and much more fundamental problem facing the Roman were in Chapter 8, the disappearance of the Huns as an efficient second and much more runnament of the Roman were As we saw in Chapter 8, the disappearance of the Huns as an effective western imperial regimes with no choice but to buy street As we saw in Chapter 8, the thought of the immigrant powers now established with no choice but to buy support force left western imperial regular powers now established on the Visigoths by offering them a free hand from at least some of the Visigoths by offering them a free hand to soil. Avitus won over the Visigoths by offering them a free hand to soil. Majorian had heard to soil. Avitus won over the spain. Majorian had been forced their great profit, as it turned out – in Spain. Majorian had been forced the Ruroundians' desire to expand, and had allowed. their great pront, as it turned to recognize the Burgundians' desire to expand, and had allowed then more new cities (civitates) in the Rhône wall. to recognize the Burganian to take over some more new cities (civitates) in the Rhône valley; and to take over some more new cities (civitates) in the Rhône valley; and to take over some much as they wanted to allow the Visigoths to do pretty much as they wanted wanted wanted with the value of the value in Spain. To buy support for Libius Severus, similarly, Ricimer had handed over to the Visigoths the major Roman city of Narbonne with all its revenues.¹³ But now, there were simply too many players in the field, and this, combined with rapid regime change, had created a situation in which even the already much reduced western tax reve nues were being further expended in a desperate struggle for stability. Three things needed to happen in the west to prevent its annihilation Legitimate authority had to be restored; the number of players needing to be conciliated by any incoming regime had to be reduced; and the Empire's revenues had to rise. Analysts in the eastern Empire came to precisely this conclusion, and in the mid-460s hatched a plan that had a very real chance of putting new life back into the ailing west.

THE DEATH OF Severus opened the path to renewed negotiations between Ricimer and Constantinople. They were long and tortuous No source gives us details, but there was a seventeen-month interest num - the longest yet - before the next western emperor was proclaimed, on 12 April 467. This gap, as much as the new emperor's identity alarm the proclaimed as the new emperor's identity, alerts us to the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in all a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in a control of the crooked diplomatic paths that must have been trodden in a control of the crooked diplomatic paths are control of the trodden in the interim. The choice fell on Anthemius, an eastern general of general of proven abilities and high pedigree, and the nominee of the eastern emperor. eastern emperor Leo (although Ricimer certainly accepted the appointment). Anthonius ment). Anthemius' maternal grandfather – also called Anthemius – had been virtual miles – 6.14 acting been virtual ruler of the eastern Empire for the decade 405-14, acting as Praetorian Decade 405-14, acting of the reign of as Praetorian Prefect in the east during the last years of the reign of the emperor Assault the emperor Arcadius and the early years of his son Theodosius II.

The new emperor and the early years of his son disringuished. The new emperor's father, Procopius, was nearly as distinguished

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proceded from the usurper Procopius of the mid-360s, and hence of Constantine, he had risen to summerly related to the house on the Damidon of the Mid-360s, and hence perchéed from the usurpos of Constantine, he had risen to supreme of Constantine, he had risen to supreme strainly related to the house on the Persian front (magister milionary of Roman forces on the Persian front). percent related to the mouse on the Persian front (magister militum per sommand of Roman forces on the younger Anthemius followed his command in the mid-420s. The younger Anthemius followed his command in the mid-420s. omnand of Roman 101ccs of the younger Anthemius followed his father omnand in the mid-420s. The younger Anthemius followed his father on the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the on in the mu-quos. In the mid-quos in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction, emerging in the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction is the fall-out from the mid-450s of the army, where he gained distinction is the fall-out from the mid-450s of the army a leading role in containing the fall-out from the mid-450s of the army and the army and the army are the mid-450s of the army and the army are the mid-450s of the army and the army are the army are the mid-450s of the army and the army are the a on the army, where he games amountaining the fall-out from the Hunnic play a leading role in containing the fall-out from the Hunnic play a leading role in Community and Itali-out from the Hunnic play after Attila's death. 14 Immediately afterwards, he was named for 455, and Patrician, and promoted to community for 455, and Patrician, and promoted to community for 455. impire after Attila a management of the central field armies (magister milirum management) general of the central field armies (magister militum praesentalis). He also of one of the emperor Marcian's only daughter, received the hand in marriage of the emperor Marcian's only daughter, nccived the manufacture of the control of the contr Adia Marcia Dack III back III at Marcia Marcia become emperor, and for once this doesn't 100k like an exaggeration. The marriage suggests that Anthemius was Marcian's preferred successor. But the purple didn't come to him. Sidonius says that his own reluctance held him back (but that's another common trope of panegyric). Instead, Leo was promoted - he was a guards officer through whom the other magister militum praesentalis, Aspar, was looking to run the Empire. Anthemius cannot, however, have been too disaffected, because he continued to serve the new emperor as general.15

In short, Anthemius' imperial credentials were impeccable, and so equally applicable to the post of eastern emperor that Leo and Aspar may well have been scanning the 'Italian situations vacant' column in the Constantinopolitan Times for quite a while before Sevenus convenient demise. Even if happy to be rid of him, it did not detract from the level of support they were willing to offer him. In the spring of 467 Anthemius arrived in Italy with a military force provided by the commanding general of Roman field forces in Illyricum (magister militum per Illyricum), Marcellinus. 16 Marcellinus was Originally Aetius' appointee and had taken control of the area on his assassination. The emperor Majorian had reconfirmed his appointment, but after Majorian's death he applied to Constantinople rather than to Libius Severus, for authorization to continue in his post. It was through the eastern emperor Leo, therefore, that Marcellinus' support for Anthemius was channelled. Leo also secured Ricimer's consent to Anthemius' promotion, and the relationship was sealed by a marriage alliance: as soon as Anthemius arrived in Italy, his only daughter Alypia married Ricimer. Combining talent and pedigree with backing from both the west in the person of Ricimer, and Constantinople, Anthemius was the man to restore political stability, if anyone could, we west.

man west.

Anthemius went to Italy with a plan for dealing with the most problems facing his new Empire. First, he quickly have to the local problems facing his new Empire. Roman was Anthemius went to Italy with the fundamental problems facing his new Empire. First, he quickly the fundamental problems facing his new Empire. First, he quickly the fundamental problems facing his new Empire. First, he quickly the fundamental functioning as part of the country to estimate the state of the country to estimate th fundamental problems racing a modicum of order north of the Alps in Gaul. It is difficult to eath of Gaul was still functioning as part of the western a modicum of order north of the western by the south the Visigoths, and certainly the Burgundan how much of Gaul was sun remained have much of Gaul was sun remained have much of Gaul was sun remained have been supported by the Burgunday remained have in 467. In the south the visigous, accepted Anthemius' rule; both of their territories remained legal to the Empire. We know that institutions like the cursus bulk. part of the Empire. We know that institutions like the cursus public part of the Empire. Further north, things are less clean part of the Empire. We will be sufficiently some still functioning here. Further north, things are less clear the Rhine, or what was left of it, had gone into were still functioning nere. The Roman army of the Rhine, or what was left of it, had gone into the Rhine of Majorian, and part of it still formed the control of the contr Roman army of the Knine, of which are gone into the on the deposition of Majorian, and part of it still formed the core of the on the deposition of triangular transfer to have contributed to the rice of a seem to have contributed to the rice of the rice Roman Britain also seem to have contributed to the rise of a new Roman Britain also seem to power in Britainy, and for the first time Frankish warbands were power soil. In the fourth centure, no flexing their muscles on Roman soil. In the fourth century, Franks had played the same kind of role on the northern Rhine frontier as the Alamanni played to their south. Semi-subdued clients, they both raided and traded with the Roman Empire, and contributed substantially to its military manpower, several leading recruits, such as Bauto and Arbogast, rose to senior Roman commands. Also like the Alamanni the Franks were a coalition of smaller groups, each with their own leadership. By the 460s, as Roman control collapsed in the north, some of these warband leaders began for the first time to operate exclusively on the Roman side of the frontier, selling their services, it seems, to the highest bidder.17

None of these Gallic powers was strong enough directly to threaten what remained of the Roman west when it was buoyed up with eastern support, and Anthemius' arrival cowed all of them at least into acquiescence. Gaul, however, wasn't the fundamental problem. Byen Majorian had done nearly as well there as Anthemius in attracting acceptance, even support, from the Gallo-Roman landowners. The Gallic Sidonius, for instance, had played a role in the Burgundians seizure of Lyon, and for this Majorian initially punished him with a higher tax bill. In response, Sidonius wrote the emperor a poem complaining in mannered and deliberately self-deprecating fashion. For now my talkative muse is silenced by the tax, and culls instead of Versil's of Vergil's and Terence's lines the pence and halfpence owed to the Exchequer's a second of his Exchequer.'18 So Majorian let him off and, along with many of his

END OF EMPIRE sidonius joined the ranks of the emperor's Gallic supporters. A chis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischis era recalls a convivial evening when the emperor dischister and the empe

Sidonius joined the ranks or the emperor's Gallic supporters. A evening when the emperor dined a convivial evening when the emperor dined with Sidonius and his friends. 19

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back into the Roman west: reconquering North Africa. The Vandal-Alan coalition had never been accepted into the country club of allied immigrant powers that began to emerge in the mid-fifth century. The treaty of 442, which recognized its seizure of Carthage, was granted when Aetius was at the nadir of his fortunes; it was an exception to the Vandals' usual relationship with the Roman state, which was one of great hostility. The western Empire, as we have seen, from the 410s onwards had consistently allied with the Visigoths against the Vandals and Alans, and the latter's history after 450 was one of similar exclusion. Unlike the Visigoths or the Burgundians, the Vandals and Alans did not contribute to Aetius' military coalition that fought against Attila in Gaul in 451; nor were they subsequently courted or rewarded by the regimes of Avitus, Majorian or Libius Severus. Their leader Geiseric was certainly after membership of the club, as his sack of Rome at the time of Petronius Maximus paradoxically showed. This was partly motivated by the fact that Maximus had upset the marriage arrangements between his son Huneric and the elder daughter of Valentinian III. After they sacked Rome in 455, the Vandals continued to raid the coast of Sicily and various Mediterranean islands. This was an enterprise undertaken in large measure for profit, but Geiseric also

had a more ambitious, political, agenda. Part of his booty from the frame of Rome had been Valentinian III's women: his wife line had a more ambitious, political, agential. Fait of his booty from the sack of Rome had been Valentinian III's women: bis wife light and his daughters Eudocia and Placidia. Eudocia wife light to the same for Huneric. Probably in 462 a way A. sack of Rome had been Valenting in a women: his women budoxia, and his daughters Eudocia and placidia. Eudocia wife licht to Geiseric's eldest son Huneric. Probably in 462, Eudocia was day of Constantinople, where placid Eudoxia, and his daughters Buuocia and Figure Eudoxia. Budocia Budocia Was dela were freed to go to Constantinople, where placidia matrial of the Columbia who had fleed the matrial matrial matrial Eudoxia,
married to Geiseric's eldest son riving in 100aury in 462, Budoxia who placidia were freed to go to Constantinople, where placidia was duly senator called Anicius Olybrius, who had fled to the can the can Placidia were freed to go to Constant Placidia while Placidia managed Roman senator called Anicius Olybrius, who had fled to the carred to the Roman senator called Anicius Ciyotta, Villa IIau IIed to the eastern capital to escape the sack. After 462, Geiseric Was canvassing for the Vandal new Yandal new Yan Anicius Olybrius as heir to the western the Vandal North the Vandal Polyton the Vandal Revenue that the National Polyton the Vandal Polyton the Vandal Polyton the Vandal Revenue that the National Polyton the Vandal Polyton the Vandal Revenue that the National Revenue that the of view, this would have the next king of the Vandals for a another route to the political acceptance that Cair. western emperor would have brother-in-law: another route to the political acceptance that Geisen

The history that had brought the Vandals to North Africa was only removed the common point of view than the common point of view the com The history that had bloom a Roman point of view, than that Wisiooths and Burgundians installed in Gaul All of the control of marginally less respectable, which had seen Visigoths and Burgundians installed in Gaul. All three which had seen Visigoths and Burgundians installed in Gaul. All three which had seen visigous the Roman state by military action, or the choice the west Roman imperial and three choice the west Roman imperial and the choice the choice the west Roman imperial and the choice the choice the west Roman imperial and the choice the choice the west Roman imperial and the choice the choice the west Roman imperial and the choice the c threat of it; given the choice, the west Roman imperial authorities would rather have had nothing to do with any of them. The red problem undermining Geiseric's bid to be admitted to the immigrant powers' club was not so much past indiscretions per se, but the fact that, while in flagrante, he had come into possession of the richest, most productive provinces of the western Empire. Since the 440s, in addition to the lands he already held in North Africa, he had seized Tripolitania and a number of Mediterranean islands. His annual raids were spreading fear and disorder up and down the Italian coastline. Destroying the Vandals would therefore achieve two highly desirable ends in one fell swoop. It would take out one of the three major barbarian powers established on western soil, and, more important, return an invaluable reservoir of wealth to the imperial treasury.

It is worth indulging here in a little counterfactual history. The knock-on effects of a decisive victory over Geiseric, itself far from inconceivable, 23 would have been far-reaching. With Italy and North Africa united, Spain could have been added to the new western power base. Halilla all erayed in base. Unlike the Vandal-Alan coalition, the Suevi who had stayed in Spain ware Their nows Spain were no more than a relatively minor irritant. Their power ebbed and no more than a relatively minor irritant. ebbed and flowed according to the amount of Roman resources devoted to the amount of reason to devoted to the peninsula at any one time, and there is no reason to think that the think that they would have been able to hold out against a full-scale imperial countries. imperial counterattack. Then, once Hispanic revenues had begun to

much reconstruction would in turn have become again, much reconstruction would in turn have become and Burgundians and Burgund much reconstruction would in turn have become and Burgundians could a spain. At the very least, Visigoths and Burgundians could a spain again. At the very least, Visigoths and Burgundians could a spain again, and again, again, and again, agai

Mark the very reast, visigoths and Burgundians could for their more recent acquisitions such as Narbonne and the action of their more recent acquisitions. per reduced to much striants such as Narbonne and the cities are fifther more recent acquisitions such as Narbonne and the cities after their more recent assertive Bagaudae of the nomble walley. The assertive Bagaudae of the nomble walley. we between more recent acquisitions such as inarbonne and the cities and of the north could the phone valley. The assertive Bagaudae of the north could the have been brought back into line.

of the Ruone valley. I assertive Bag assertive been brought back into line. have been prought back inchanged more like a coalition, such a reborn west would still have looked more like a coalition, such a reborn autonomous Gothic and Buroundian substantially autonomous Gothic and Burgundian spheres of substantially alongside the territories under direct Roman rule, single integrated state like the old fourth-century. physice coexisting a single integrated state like the old fourth-century Empire. But the a single integrated would have become once again at but a single more would have become once again the dominant the Roman centre would have become once again the dominant he Roman use dominant again use dominant with the strategic situation restored at least to a level comparble with that of the 410s, before the loss of North Africa - better, the will there would be no Vandal-Alan coalition loose in Spain. Move on another twenty years, and even the Romano-Brits, struggling against the Saxon invaders, might have benefited. This is, of course, a best-case scenario. The Visigoths had proved impossible to destroy even during the eras of Theodosius I and Alaric when the Empire had disposed of much greater assets, so they were a problem that was unlikely to go away. Nonetheless, there were plenty of Rome-focused landowners still around in Gaul and Spain in the late 460s, as Sidonius' dash to Italy to seek out Anthemius shows, who would have welcomed the resurgence of a plausible western Empire. And, however you look at it, a reborn west based on the possession of Italy, North Africa, most of Spain and large chunks of Gaul was a formidable prospect. Even as late as the 460s, all was not lost: a successful campaign against the Vandals could have halted the vicious circle of decline and guaranteed the western Empire an active political life for the foreseeable future.

That eliminating the Vandals was the best available answer to the problems of the west had been appreciated for some time. The only other western regime to have shown much fight after the assassination of Actius was that of Majorian, and he had adopted the same strategy. From early in his reign, we have a verse panegyric Sidonius gave in the emperor's honour during a stay at Lyon in 458. After the usual expression of superlatives designed to demonstrate that Majorian has been blessed with all the qualities of the perfect emperor, the scene then shifts to Rome, personified as an armed goddess surveying her territories. All is well, until:14

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Of a sudden Africa flung herself down weeping, with her swarp torn. Bowing her forehead she broke the come of the Of a sudden Africa flung nersen according, with her swarthy cheeks all torn. Bowing her forehead she broke the comeans that have bane; and the cheeks all torn. Bowing ner rock was now her bane; and that come, a third part of the world, unfortunate bern that crowned her, ears whose number of the world, unfortunate her, and that she began: I come, a third part of the world, unfortunate her and that is fortunate. This man [Geiseric], son of a slave world. she began: I come, a truru part one man is fortunate. This man [Geiseric], son of a slave women to be a robber; he hath blotted out our rightful lead one man is fortunate. This man is lave work a slave work a day hath wielded his barbarian sceptre in man is fortunate. hath long been a rodder, he hath long been a rodder, he hath long been a rodder, he hath wielded his barbarian sceptre in my land and for many a day hath wielded his barbarian sceptre in my land this strange. and for many a day name whether the stranger love away this stranger love.

This opens a long appeal for Rome to awaken from her slumbers and into which Sidonius interweaves an agent and This opens a long appear for the side of t majorian's martial past, again so as to parade his credentials as the solution of the goddess's speech comes to a close at the solution of the goddess's speech comes to a close at the solution of the goddess's speech comes to a close at the solution of the goddess's speech comes to a close at the goddess's speech comes to Majorian's martial past, again right man for the job. The goddess's speech comes to a close with a

he is sunk in indolence and, thanks to untold gold, no longer knows aught of steel. His cheeks are bloodless; a drunkard's heaviness afflicts him, pallid flabbiness possesses him, and his stomach, loaded with continual gluttony, cannot rid itself of the

Nothing like a little fart joke to lighten the mood, even at an imperial celebration. But Sidonius also had a more serious point. The time was ripe for Majorian to avenge Africa 'so that Carthage may cease to war

This was a direct statement of intent. No imperial panegyrist was ever allowed to stand before an emperor and tell him to do some specific thing, unless that emperor already had every intention of so doing.25 Sidonius had clearly been told that one of the aims of his panegyric was to prepare landowning opinion for an assault on the Vandals. This was early in the year 458. There was still much to do in preparation, as Sidonius makes clear. For a start, more order had to be restored in Gaul before they could concentrate on the North African adventure. adventure; and fleets had to be constructed.26 But from its earliest days Majorian's regime committed itself to an assault on the Vandals.

In 461, it was ready to deliver. Majorian's plan was, with his main tee. to follow it was ready to deliver. force, to follow the route taken by the Vandals themselves. By the spring 300 all. spring, 300 ships were gathered in harbours along the coast of the Hispanic province. Hispanic province of Carthaginensis, from Cartago Nova (Cartagens) to Illici (Elche) to Illici (Elche) about a hundred kilometres further north. Majorian

END OF EMPIRE duly arrived in Spain, from there to be transported, it marching in full battle order in Mauretania, with a view to marching in full battle order in Mauretania, to Mauretania, arrived in Spain, from there to be transported, it bis army duly arrived in Spani, moin there to be transported, it with a view to marching in full battle order into Mauretania, with a view to marching in full battle order into Mauretania, Wandal Africa.²⁷ At the same time, Marcelline order into heartland of Vandal Africa.²⁷ At the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland of the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland order into the heartland order in the same time, Marcelline order into the heartland order into the he of his Mauretania, Willia View William in full battle order into Mauretania, William Africa. At the same time, Marcellinus led sents of his Illyrican field army into battle in Sicily. expelling the ments of his Illyrican field army into battle in Sicily. by heardand of vandan field army into battle in Sicily, expelling the dements of his Illyrican footholds they had established on the island contained they had established the of his myrican they had established on the island. Securing footholds they had established on the island. Securing footholds from footholds hour may also have been decimal and in itself, but may also have been decimal. words from tootholds also have been designed to sow sidy was an Geiseric's mind about the trajectory of the yas an end in 113CH, and about the trajectory of the main attack.

Multi Geiseric's mind about the trajectory of the main attack. dubt in Geiseric 8 made peace overtures, but Majorian was reging cornered, Geiseric them. More to the point the main attack. Reling complete, but Majorian was confident enough to reject them. More to the point, the emperor had confident enough in the expedition to contemplate confident enough to the expedition to contemplate compromise. But, saked too Majorian's plans. Geiseric struck Game Lie G whed too much and destroyed Majorian's shine in the standard of Majorian's plans, Geiseric struck first: his fleet raided the spanish coast and destroyed Majorian's shipping. The emperor's army Spanish cooling its heels on the Spanish beaches; the campaign, heralded as the centrepiece of Majorian's policy as early as 458, had

Majorian had lost his hold on power. He left Spain in high summer, travelling back overland to Italy. En route, he was arrested and deposed by Ricimer on 2 August, and executed five days later. For Majorian, the African gamble ended in disaster, but the reasoning behind it was sound. When Anthemius came west a few years later, it can have been no surprise to anyone that his eyes were fixed firmly on Carthage.

The Byzantine Armada

le Leo was happy enough to remove so formidable a presence as Anthemius from Constantinople, the eastern emperor's contribution to his attempt to reconquer Vandal Africa was unstinting. This may well have been part of the deal between them. A number of sources give us a fair idea of the costs involved. The most detailed account is found in fragments from a work by another Constantinople-based historian. Penned by a certain Candidus in the late fifth century, the fragments are preserved in an encyclopaedic Byzantine work, the Suda, of the late tenth. Here we learn: 'The official in charge of [financial] matters revealed that 47,000 pounds of gold came through the Prefects, and through the Count of the Treasuries an additional 17,000 pounds of gold and 700,000 pounds of silver, as well as monies raised through confiscations and from the Emperor Anthemius. 28 One pound of gold equated to more or less eighteen of silver, giving a total of about

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103,000 pounds of gold, and it was called in from every from general taxation (the purview of the prefects), from a fall to the Count of at th 103,000 pounds of gold, and it was cauce it from every source: from general taxation (the purview of the prefects) available that Anthonic from the Treature. source: from general taxation (use purview of the Prefects), available exploitation of imperial estates (that of the Count of the Treasure) as confiscations and anything else that Anthemius could explore of the Treasure of exploitation of imperial estates (the exploitation of imperial estates (the exploitation of imperial estates) (the exploitation of impe as well as confiscations and anything as well as confiscations and anything from the west. Of other sources, one gives more or less the same others put it higher: at 120,000 from the west. Of other source, figure as Candidus, while two others put it higher: at 120,000 and of gold. The figures are roughly similar (Candid figure as Candidus, withe the figures are roughly similar (Candidus) and include the monies he refers to as having been similar (Candidus). 130,000 pounds of goid. The series to as having been raised himself, from the west). The general level of maonic. by Anthemius himself, from the west). The general level of magnitude construction of Justinian's Church by Anthemius himsen, morning is also perfectly plausible. The construction of Justinian's Church of Constantinople in the 530s, for instance. Constantinople in the 530s of instance. Hagia Sophia in Constantinople in the 530s, for instance, cost the east of gold. The emperor A Roman treasury 15-20,000 pounds of gold. The emperor Anastasius produce financial prudence was legendary and a solution of gold. Roman treasury 13-20,000 process of the control of the death of the de reign had been blessed with relative peace, left, on his death, 320,000 pounds of gold for his successor. A hundred and three thousand pounds is forty-six tons: a huge figure, then, but plausible enough, and a good guide to Leo's commitment to the west.29

The military effort generated by all this cash was correspondingly massive. An armada of eleven hundred ships, nearly four times the size of the fleet assembled by Majorian, was assembled from across the eastern Empire. Again, the figure is plausible. If the much damaged western Empire could find 300 in 461,30 1,100 for such an ambitious project is entirely proportionate. No one gives tonnages for the 468 expedition, but the ships of an east Roman fleet of 532 varied between 20 and 330 tons. Most of the vessels were tiny by modern standards. The vast majority were merchant ships powered by sails alone, but there may have been some specialist warships, dromons, that would proceed as far as the action under sail, then join battle under our power,31 The military manpower committed was similarly to scale. Procopius puts the figure at 100,000, but that seems both high and suspiciously round. The later fleet of 500 ships in 532 carried an army of 16,000, so the 1,100 ships of 468 may have been conveying something something over 30,000 soldiers (sailors are not included here). In addition 32 in 1.300 soldiers (sailors are not included here). addition, as in 461, Marcellinus and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also came west This air and some of his Illyrian command also can be also c came west. This time they first drove the Vandals out of Sardinia, and then occupied Station they first drove the Vandals out of Sardinia, and then occupied Sicily in force. A third force, recruited from the army of Egypt and placed in force at third force, recruited from the army of the standard in Egypt and placed under the command of the general Heraclius, was put ashore simulations. put ashore simultaneously in Tripolitania, where it joined with the locals in throwing locals in throwing out the Vandals who had occupied their cities since

Adding together the sailors and all these subsidiary forces, then, was certainly well over so and all these subsidiary forces, then, Mind committed to the expedition was certainly well over 50,000 command of this huge expedition was allotted to Leo's brother-in-Command of this number of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of a superior of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of the Balkans fighting of the last attempte of the Balkans fighting off the last attempte of the Balkans fighting of the last attempte of the Balkans fighting of the last attempte of the Balkans fighting of t the general Dashibers, the Balkans fighting off the last attempts of Attila's miliary success in the Balkans for the Danube. By the Last attempts of Attila's pullify success in the Danaha and there is a limited of the Danube. By the beginning of success of Attila's coming, and there is a limited of the Danube. By the beginning of success of Attila's and there is a limited of the Danube. of find sanctuary what was coming, and there is a huge sense we everyone knew what was coming are in Romanian in the panegyric Sidonius gave in Romanian in the sidonius gave in the sidoniu depectation in the panegyric Sidonius gave in Rome on 1 January of depectation in the panegyric Sidonius gave in Rome on 1 January of dependation in the consulship of accession to the consulship. One that there is little to the consulship of the consulsh the year in the collision has claimed that there is little reflection of the by antine armada in western sources. For once, I disagree with him.33 Byzanning of the sea and sailing suffuse Sidonius' speech, beginning with his introduction of Anthemius:34

This, my Lords, is the man for whom Rome's brave spirit and your love did yearn, the man to whom our commonwealth, like a ship overcome by tempest and without a pilot, hath committed her broken frame, to be more deftly guided by a worthy steersman that she may no more fear storm or pirate.

Marine metaphor then tacks in and out, with the speech concluding:

But now too strong are the breezes that drive my sails before them. Check, O Muse, my humble measures, and as I seek the harbour let the anchor of my song settle at last in a calm restingplace. Yet of the fleet and forces that you, O prince [Anthemius], are handling and of the great deeds you will do in a short while, l, if God further my prayers, shall tell of in due course . . .

The sense of anticipation of a naval expedition in the offing is unmistakable. And Sidonius' speech captures the grand design: Anthemius came to us with a covenant made by the two realms; an empire's peace has sent him to conduct our wars.' He had come with the promise of military salvation for the west, and in 468 it arrived. Sidonius caught the moment perfectly. That such an armada could be assembled was in itself a tour de force. Now would come the true test. The storm of battle was about to detonate once more in the western Mediterranean. The fleet, the supreme symbol of imperial unity, was on its way.

The Roman plan was emphatically not to fight a fleet engagement.